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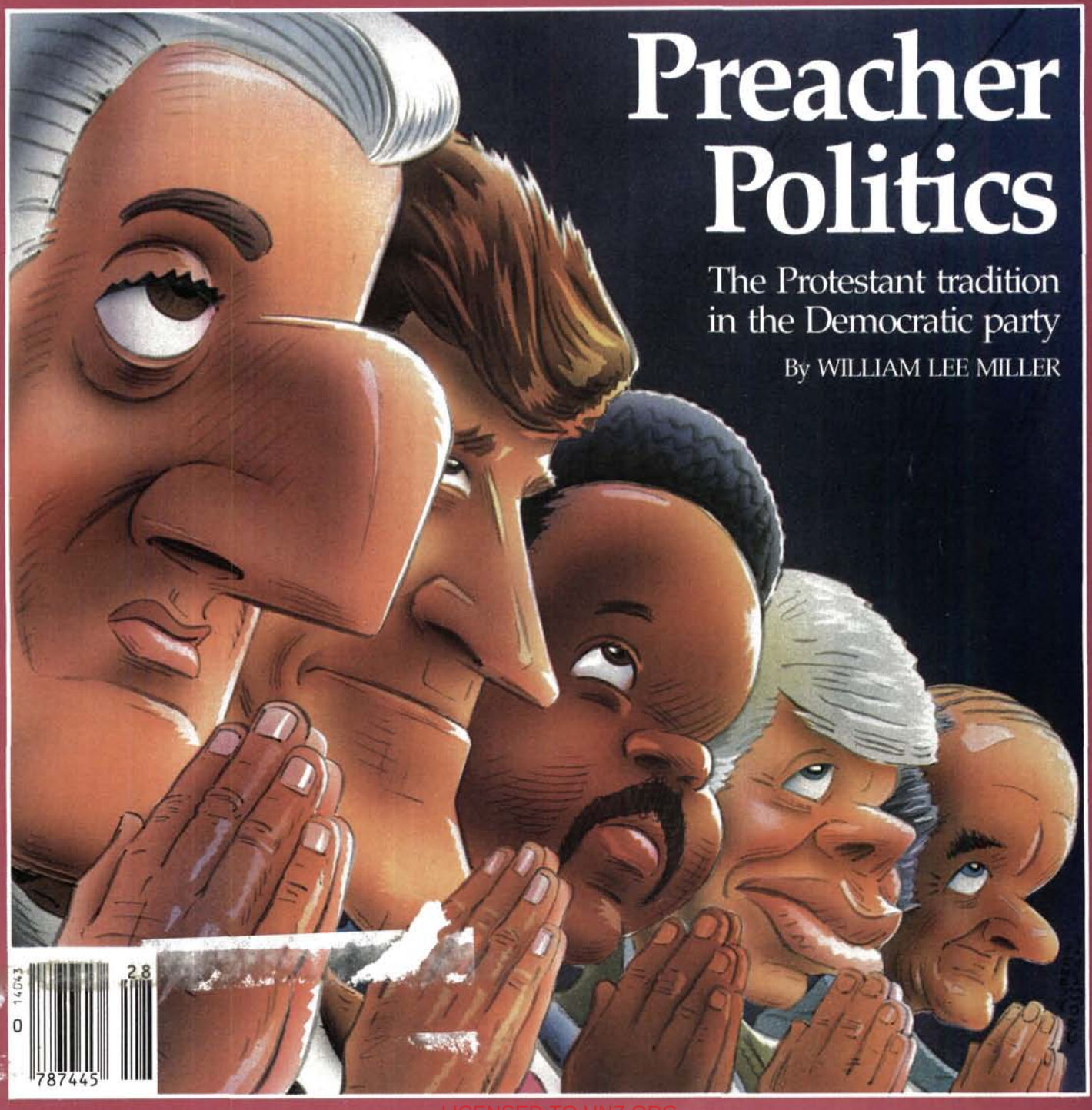
THE NEW REPUBLIC



Preacher Politics

The Protestant tradition in the Democratic party

By WILLIAM LEE MILLER

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CORRESPONDENCE

PAC POLLUTION

To the editors:
Full disclosure of campaign contributions, as proposed in your editorial, "Running From The PACs" (TNR, May 28), is important but it is not enough. In 1974 PACs provided about 18 percent of Congressional campaign funds; today they're providing more than 30 percent. That's why I support the Common Cause position that calls for restricting PAC contributions (not eliminating them as your editorial seemed to say) and encouraging more individual contributions through such mechanisms as tax credits and matching public financing.

We limit the amounts of certain contaminants to prevent pollution and we spend public money to clean up our physical environment when it becomes polluted. We should be just as concerned about political pollution, and just as ready to apply comparable remedies.

DOUGLAS R. RUSHING
Kansas City, Missouri

DUNNED WRONG

To the editors:
Will someone please tell Chuck Lane that nothing can be reduced by 200 percent ("Dunning Democracy," TNR, June 4). A reduction of 100 percent results in annihilation. Now then, by what percentage was the value of the Dominican peso actually reduced?

L. B. JOCH
Sumas, Washington

Mr. Lane replies:
Mr. Joch is right. The International Monetary Fund has forced Third World governments to adopt some pretty drastic policies, but it can't make them repeal the laws of mathematics.

I wrote that the Dominicans had devalued the peso by "200 percent—a move which instantly doubled the prices Dominicans pay for imported necessities." I should have said that they reduced the peso's value by 67 percent, a move which raised prices by 200 percent. And, of course, when you raise prices by 200 percent, you are tripling, not doubling, them. I am now pricing refresher courses in arithmetic.

BENTSEN BURNER

To the editors:
I was somewhat shocked by the cheap shot taken at Senator Lloyd Bentsen by Hendrik Hertzberg in "Washington Diarist" ("Post-Primary Depression," TNR, June 11). Undoubtedly all of us have made statements at some point in our lives that we subsequently regret. I assume Senator Bentsen regrets his proposal to drop the A-bomb on North Korea. In these past thirty years Senator Bentsen has developed an outstanding record in business as well as in the United States Senate. Is it really fair to dig up something that stale? If you have a disagreement with Lloyd Bentsen, couldn't you find a more legitimate and current issue? As a member of the Tennessee delegation to the Democratic convention in San Francisco, I certainly hope Vice President Mondale selects Lloyd Bentsen as his running mate. We couldn't do better!

D. BRUCE SHINE
Kingsport, Tennessee

SOWELL'S OBJECTIONS

To the editors:
It is truly ironic that Michael Harrington speaks of "straw men" in his review of my book *Civil Rights: Rhetoric or Reality?* ("Straw Men In Struggle," TNR, June 11). His whole review is one straw man after another. Mr. Harrington provides a textbook example of how to discredit ideas without having to confront them:

(1.) Exaggerate what the author said—and then attack him for exaggeration. Absolutist words like "all," "total," and "nothing"—words which seldom apply in the study of human beings—are added to what I actually said. And then Mr. Harrington lectures me for "ignoring the difference between 'all' and 'some' and 'any.' " Cute.

(2.) Insinuate that the author believes something which he has never said, and then attack what you have insinuated. The doctrine that discrimination actually causes groups to do better is the target in this case. No such doctrine appears anywhere in *Civil Rights*—or in anything else I have written. Yet Mr. Harrington presents his wonderfully balanced assessment of this doctrine, complete with the judgment that Max Weber had a "more sophisticated" version. In reality, I have no version at all, but Mr. Harrington's escape clause is that I come "perilously close" to this doctrine. His tactic is not perilously close to hogwash. It *is* hogwash.

(3.) Where facts cannot be refuted, cite like-minded people who prefer some alternative explanation. When I cite statistics, Mr. Harrington cites Lester Thurow, Christopher Jencks, and others, and praises their work. It is reminiscent of the Sherlock Holmes story, in which a suspect vouches for his witness and then the witness vouches for the suspect. We don't need to be Sherlock Holmes to see through that.

(4.) Make up an argument that completely changes the thrust of what the author said—and then attribute that argument to the author. According to Mr. Harrington, "Sowell proceeds to argue that all who understand that culture and history play a role in the fate of ethnic and racial groups must oppose government intervention to correct the inequalities between those groups." *Civil Rights* is a critique of specific policies, not a clarion call to mobilize general opposition to whatever might be done by government to equalize opportunities. *Civil Rights* repeatedly praises the federal intervention that destroyed the Jim Crow system in the South, and also points out the benefits of the G.I. Bill to blacks. Whether I am right or wrong, that is my argument—as distinguished from Mr. Harrington's concoction. My criticism of current policy is precisely that what has been done does not in fact promote equality of opportunity.

This list by no means exhausts the distortions and inventions in Mr. Harrington's review. In only one respect does Mr. Harrington's review reflect what the book was about. In the introduction to *Civil Rights*, I predict: "Nothing is more certain than its distortion." And in the final section, on the tragic degeneration of discussion on this subject, I point out the reckless tactics that betray the desperation of those trying to justify existing policy against its critics: "Not since the days of Senator Joe McCarthy has the drive to discredit so overridden every other consideration."

THOMAS SOWELL
Stanford, California

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2 **CORRESPONDENCE** ..... Polluting PACs, math miscue, Sowell exceptions, &c.

4 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ..... ARISE, YE YUPPIES!
In defense of an embattled class.

5 **THE EDITORS** ..... LOW DOWN PAYMENT
The deficit is bigger than the Hill's plan to cut it.
NOTEBOOK

7 **JONATHAN ROSENBLUM** ..... U.S.I.A. TODAY
The Reagan blacklist had a Democratic granddaddy.

9 **HAROLD MEYERSON** ..... LABOR'S LESSONS
Betting early on Walter Mondale paid off for the A.F.L.-C.I.O.—and exposed some deep problems.

12 **GAIL SHEEHY** ..... POSTCARD: IN TRANSIT
Passing through Saigon a decade after the fall.

14 **JEFFERSON MORLEY** ..... DOUBLE REVERSE DISCRIMINATION
Is affirmative action for blacks only? When Starrett City used preferences for whites to achieve racial balance, the quota debate was turned on its head.

18 **WILLIAM LEE MILLER** ..... THE SEMINARIAN STRAIN
Reagan may talk God, but the Democrats have got religion in their blood. From McGovern and Carter to Mondale, Hart, and Jackson, a certain kind of Protestantism has shaped the lives of their leaders.

24 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ..... ON FILMS: OLD SCHOOL TIES
From upper-class English schoolboy to Soviet agent.

26 **ROBERT BRUSTEIN** ..... ON THEATER: HARD AND SOFT MACHINES
A flailing British farce and a familiar Soviet drama.

27 **MORTON KONDRACKE** ..... BEYOND THE MELTING PAT
Loyalties by Daniel Patrick Moynihan

31 **GREGORY RABASSA** ..... OUR MAN FROM HAVANA
Infante's Inferno by G. Cabrera Infante

33 **HERBERT G. GUTMAN** ..... WORKING-CLASS HEROES
Chants Democratic: New York City and the Ri[illegible] of the American Working Class, 1788-1850 by Sean Wilentz

34 **MICHAEL RYAN** ..... POEM *This Is Why*

36 **VICTOR BROMBERT** ..... SAVING THE NOVEL
Motives for Fiction by Robert Alter
Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative by Peter Brooks

39 **ROBERT MIDDLEKAUFF** ..... GEORGE THE ENLIGHTENED
Cincinnatus: George Washington and the Enlightenment by Garry Wills

42 **WASHINGTON DIARIST** ..... CLEANING UP QUOTES

COVER by Robert Grossman for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 18.

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FROM WASHINGTON

ARISE, YE YUPPIES!

Now that the Gary Hart campaign is more or less over, perhaps we can think calmly for a moment about yuppies. The specter of a federal quiche stamps program has passed. There will be no trans-Atlantic Perrier pipeline, no National Tennis Elbow Institute, no Department of Lifestyle. Oh, women may continue to stroll down city sidewalks wearing gray suits, white shirts with little bows, stereo earphones, and running shoes. But this uniform won't be required by Executive Order. Nor will there be tax write-offs for hot tubs, free government-surplus goat cheese, an F.D.A. ban on frozen peas. The peril is over, at least for four years. What is it, then, about the notion of young urban professionals as a social class with identifiable habits and political attitudes that so many people seem to find alarming, ridiculous, or even contemptible?

There's no denying that the yuppy phenomenon exists. Nowhere in perfect prototype, perhaps (though *People* magazine is probably looking), but everywhere in bits and pieces. Even in Anchorage, Alaska, where I recently spent a couple of weeks, there are fern bars and wine stores and two-lawyer couples who stop for fresh fish on their way back from exercise class. The 1964 earthquake virtually wiped out Anchorage's stock of older houses, but the one or two that remain standing have been gentrified to within an inch of their lives. The business world, characteristically, was on to yuppies long before the political world discovered them. It's not just a media whimsy.

Yuppydom is the 1980s expression of American bourgeois culture. In the 1950s it was the suburban subdivision with two cars in the garage and wife at home raising kids. In the 1980s it's the working couple in the renovated townhouse sharing the child raising with each other and probably outsiders as well. The 1980s model doesn't describe the way most people actually live, any more than the 1950s model did. But it describes a set of trends affecting a significant chunk of the middle class in this predominantly middle-class country.

What is so offensive about the idea that young and youngish adults should have developed their own version of the middle-class culture that made America great? The offense taken seems to be of two sorts. From the left, there is a sense of irony, verging on outrage, that the generation maturing in the 1960s should have settled into middle-class life at all. *The Big Chill* factor. From the right comes the charge that yuppies are a disgrace to the bourgeois banner—all trivial self-indulgence and consumerist excess, no "middle-class values" of the sterner sort.

Well. Anyone who expected a generation of social revolutionaries to emerge from the 1960s has cause to feel disappointed, though the fraction of that generation who were social revolutionaries even at the time was awfully small. Part of this disappointment, I think, is just the sadness people of every generation must feel as they settle into their 30s and realize that they've made some irrevocable choices about the patterns of their lives. It's only natural that as people approach middle age, their main concern is going to be for themselves and their families. And that's as it should be. Those who expected more of this generation expected too much.

Nevertheless, a bit of the 1960s has rubbed off on those who passed through them. "Middle-class values" of the 1980s include respect for women's equality in both public and private life, concern for the environment, tolerance of human diversity, a healthy skepticism about military adventure. These solid roots implanted in the dominant middle-class culture are surely a more valuable legacy of the 1960s than any number of aging cadres still roaming the land agitating for revolution.

However, these very same new middle-class values can be turned into an indictment. Some polls show that yuppies tend to be conservative on economic issues but liberal on social issues and al-

continued on page 41

ROOSEVELT AND CHURCHILL:
A TALE OF TWO MARTINIS.

Concerning affairs of state, these two great statesmen were frequently of a single mind.

But in the mixing of martinis, there was a parting of the ways.

FDR enjoyed his martini in the then-traditional manner: two parts gin to one part vermouth. Sir Winston, his friend and ally, acknowledged the traditional role of vermouth merely by glancing at the vermouth bottle as he poured the gin.

History would appear to be on Churchill's side. Which is not surprising. After all, who knows more about gin than the English?

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
JULY 9, 1984

LOW DOWN PAYMENT

As we write, members of a House-Senate conference committee on deficit reduction are noisily struggling to reconcile their differences. The Republican Senate wants to reduce the deficit by $142 billion over three years. The Democratic House wants to reduce it by $182 billion. The conferees are fixated on the nuances that divide the two chambers. The Senate would allow military spending to grow at 7 percent a year; the House would limit Pentagon growth to 3.5 percent. The Senate would cut Medicare outlays; the House would leave them pretty much alone. And so on.

The larger problem, wholly unaddressed by the combatants on the Hill, is that a deficit reduction in the range they are talking about does nothing to change the long-term trend of the long-term deficit. Without a "down payment" of, say, $160 billion over three years, the deficit would be about $300 billion a year—over 8 percent of the gross national product—by 1989. But even with such a package it will be over $200 billion a year—and getting inexorably bigger every year, which is the crucial test. Congress is legislating on the basis of assumptions that have already been overtaken by events. The President's budget, for instance, assumes that interest rates will be in the 7 percent range next year, and 6.2 percent by 1987. Even the Congressional Budget Office assumes interest rates in the 8 percent range, a figure that is already obsolete by least 2 to 3 points. That alone means about $15 billion in additional government interest costs over the three-year period.

Right now, interest rates are at near-record highs in real terms. The prime rate is nearly 9 points above the rate of inflation. Even the Treasury, by definition the most creditworthy borrower, is having to pay a real interest rate of about 8 percent to finance its borrowing. A federal deficit in excess of $200 billion a year throughout the 1980s will soak up 70 to 80 percent of total private savings, putting ever higher pressure on interest rates. Even with this down payment, therefore, there will be no easing of interest rate pressure.

The monetary boom is unsustainable. The $200 billion deficit is revving up demand and hence employment, but the same deficit continually bids up the cost of borrowed money, overpricing the U.S. dollar in world markets and leading to a trade imbalance now running at inconceivable annual levels of over $100 billion. With U.S. interest rates inflated and the dollar overvalued, foreigners have been willing to finance our deficit. But there is a limit to how much foreign capital can pour into the United States. Economists of most persuasions agree that America's fiscal imbalance has reached a point of dangerous instability. Should foreigners anticipate a decline in the value of the dollar, the entire flow could reverse, leading to even greater pressures on U.S. interest rates and possibly runs on American banks.

Even if that doesn't happen, the arithmetic of the deficit suggests the urgency of the situation. With the federal government borrowing 6 percent of G.N.P., and the national debt rising by $200 billion a year, a larger share of each succeeding year's federal budget will be interest on past debt. Congress's mighty deficit reduction program simply isn't big enough to change either the underlying arithmetic or the investor psychology that together keep bidding up interest rates.

Something quite bad is going to happen to the American economy sometime fairly soon. Politically, the big question is whether it will happen before or after the 1984 election. If by September the prime rate is at 14 percent, the Dow Jones is at 950, and unemployment is back at 8

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percent, the political equation will be radically transformed. But it is equally possible that the down payment will allow Chairman Paul Volcker of the Federal Reserve Board to ease monetary restraint a trifle, and that foreign underwriters of the deficit will indulge us for a few more months—allowing the economy (and the President) to muddle through until 1985.

Whoever is President next January will face a massive damage-control operation. In the meantime, some ideological sorting out is in order.

When we were learning Economics 101, liberals were the ones who liked deficits and conservatives were the ones who were crazy about balanced budgets. Today, liberals (and many conservatives) are calling for major deficit reductions, while Secretary of the Treasury Donald Regan and a dwindling band of supply siders answer in chorus: "Deficits don't raise interest rates!" Why these ideological switcheroos?

THE ANSWER is not hard to fathom. In macroeconomic management, as in show business, timing is everything. Two years ago, when concern first surfaced about big structural deficits in the "out years," former Secretary of Commerce Peter G. Peterson and others called for big spending cuts and tax increases in the name of fiscal prudence. But 1982 was no time to worry about big public deficits: as any good Keynesian knows, the pit of a recession is just when you need them. The recovery of 1983-84 was a predictably Keynesian event, a spending boom fueled by $200 billion of public borrowing. It happened to be the worst form of Keynesianism—a regressive tax cut, coupled with inflated military spending and an overvalued dollar—but it succeeded nevertheless in bringing unemployment swiftly down from 10.8 to 7.4 percent.

Keynesian deficits, of course, are not supposed to be permanent. Deficit therapy is a bit like steroid therapy. Applied at the right moment in large doses, it can shock the system into health. But prolonged dependence has dreadful side effects. We have now reached the point in the business cycle where it is appropriate to cut the deficit—to about $100 billion a year, where it would cease raising interest rates and compounding debt service costs. A lower deficit, coupled with lower interest rates, would allow investment to proceed and a recovery to shift into second gear. A cheaper dollar is also essential for a revival of American exports. If Congress and the Administration fail to enact a much larger deficit reduction program quickly, as President Johnson failed to rein in his wartime deficit in 1968, structural imbalances will worsen and a new round of inflation will follow.

Unfortunately, President Reagan never got around to taking Economics 101. And the one orthodox economist in his entourage, Martin Feldstein, has just decamped for Cambridge. The Reagan Administration would like to believe that the economy recovered for supply-side reasons: lower taxes induced investment, savings, and work effort. But we have just had the definitive refutation of that claim. Investment stayed in the doldrums for two years after the 1981 tax cut. It did not rise again until a consumer spending boom induced businesses to resume capital outlays—another sure sign that the recovery was a Keynesian event.

The long-term deficit projected for the middle and late 1980s is structural only in the sense that it reflects the tax structure and the military spending structure bequeathed to us by the Reagan program. If we had the tax system of 1980 and the military spending trajectory of President Carter's last budget, there would be no structural deficit. Mr. Reagan's tax program, even after the 1982 tax increases, reduced federal revenue by about $600 billion over four years and simultaneously raised military spending from $136 billion in 1980 to a projected $349 billion by 1987. Therein lies the structural deficit.

If the next President is Ronald Reagan, he will face a bitter choice between repealing these two pillars of his program or wrecking the economy. Domestic social expenditure has already been cut to the bone. The only means of reducing the deficit to a sustainable $100 billion range is a restoration of taxes and a slowdown in military spending. Next year should bring an overdue national debate about tax reform and spending priorities, no matter who is President. In 1981 we had the semblance of such a debate, but the assumptions were entirely those of supply-side economics.

The Reagan Administration's economic program proved in the end that Keynesianism works and the supply side doesn't. We hope that by 1985, when Congress acts to repair the damage, the economy will not be a total shambles. And we hope, too, that the Democrats, in the White House or out, will approach the issue of the fair distribution of burdens and benefits—which is to say the issue of social justice—with more mettle than they were able to muster in the craven spring of 1981.

NOTEBOOK

□ LIKE ALL MEN AND WOMEN of good will, Anthony Lewis has kindled to the cause of the Sakharovs. Their suffering has occasioned in Mr. Lewis, however, the most misguided analysis of Soviet-American relations that we have seen in a long time. In his column of May 24, *The New York Times* pundit concluded from the recent travails of Andrei Sakharov and Yelena Bonner that Ronald Reagan's policy toward the Russians is "bankrupt." Détente, he pointed out, was responsible for Solzhenitsyn's being "allowed out" in 1974. ("Allowed out?" The K.G.B. kidnapped him in the middle of the night and banished him to Switzerland against his will.) The anti-Soviet spirit, however, has produced a new Soviet repression. Never mind that the United States does not have—can never have—such godlike influence upon another power; the Soviets do as the Soviets will. But is Mr. Lewis aware that Andrei Sakharov

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is one of the most enthusiastic supporters of Ronald Reagan's approach, his "huge arms buildup," his "tough anti-Soviet rhetoric," his "militarized diplomacy"? Last summer the hero of Gorky again took his life into his hands and sent a letter to Professor Sidney Drell of Stanford, published in *Foreign Affairs*, in which he wrote that the Soviets now possess a significant advantage in ICBMs, which the West must correct with the MX missile. He worried about the West's "lack of resolve," and characterized the peace movement as "pacifist." Mr. Sakharov's views are open to debate; even brave men may be wrong. We think that generally he is right. We are certain, moreover, that he can provide no comfort to the likes of Mr. Lewis.

□ ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN: The July issue of *Playboy* magazine holds something even more unforgettable than Bo Derek's latest display of her acting ability. The interview this month is with Walid Jumblatt, "the Lebanese warlord who held off the Marines." The "enigmatic guerrilla, scholar, and self-avowed warlord" announces that he is "a Social Democrat" who "likes" the killing in Lebanon and finds it "interesting." Best of all, the Druse cutthroat reveals that when he came to New York he "wouldn't dare go" into the subways—too dangerous. The Big Apple cannot have received a better compliment in years. Still, from now on we're sticking to the pictures.

□ TWENTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "In a three-hour informal talk with a handful of correspondents, Castro remarked jauntily that anybody who now sought to destroy the Cuban revolution would have to commit the greatest act of genocide in the world's history, and he followed this up by saying that 'in normal conditions' (meaning the end of what he calls threats and provocations) he would be disposed to talk things over with the United States, but only on the guarantee of mutual respect for sovereignty and national rights. By this he obviously meant that it would have to be the United States, not he or Cuba, which would have to make concessions if a *rapprochement* were reached, and that such concessions would surely include the abandonment of the base at Guantanamo. He might, however, be prepared to cut his visible, physical ties with the Soviet Union in return for an accommodation with the United States. One shrewd diplomat confided to me that he already detected a mutual drawing apart by Cuba and the Russians. This was not due only to mutual disillusionment, but more perhaps to a decision by the Soviet Union to put on ice for the time being its plans for the political capture of Latin America while it carries forward its present policy of coming to limited terms with the United States. As for Castro, he was turning away because he did not wish to continue being utterly dependent upon his Communist partner, particularly for oil, and he now also wants to hasten consolidation by becoming acceptable to the non-Communist world." ("Cuba: Why Castro Is Feeling Stronger," by Edwin Tetlow, July 11, 1964.)

The origins of the 'blacklist.'

U.S.I.A. TODAY

ON MAY 15 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to reject Leslie Lenkowsky as deputy director of the U.S. Information Agency—the first outright rejection of a Reagan nominee. Lenkowsky's credibility had been damaged in three committee hearings by charges that he lied about his knowledge of a so-called "blacklist" of liberals in the agency's overseas speaking program. Talking to reporters after the 11-to-6 vote, Senator Christopher Dodd declared that the American Participants program had become a "cesspool" fed by partisan and ideological effluents, and that this politicization threatened "the future and survival of the agency itself." But if politicization was the real problem, the committee should have focused its criticism not only on the Reagan Administration, but on its Democratic predecessor as well. Intended or not, it was under Jimmy Carter that the "cesspool" began to fester.

Upon taking office Carter proposed, as part of his governmental reorganization efforts, to subsume the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs under U.S.I.A. Similar merger proposals had been made—and defeated—periodically since the 1950s. Former Senator William Fulbright, who had long fought to keep politics out of government-sponsored educational programs, was one of many who strongly opposed the move. He argued in a 1977 Congressional hearing that whatever Administration was in power would be too easily tempted to use the programs as a platform for political propaganda. Carter tried to quell such fears by stating in his executive order, "The new Agency's activities . . . will not be given over to the advancement of the views of any one group, any one party, or any one administration. The Agency must not operate in a covert, manipulative, or propagandistic way."

But Carter's actions made it difficult to draw a line between policy and politics. Under the reorganization, a State Department program called American Specialists, which sponsored speaking tours for academics, was merged with a more culture-oriented U.S.I.A. program called Volunteer Speakers. If the combined program—American Participants, or AmParts in governmentese—had been placed in U.S.I.A.'s Department of Educational and Cultural Affairs, it would have been administered, according to the terms of the Fulbright-Hays Act, by a nonpartisan board of scholars. Instead, Carter approved of placing AmParts in the agency's Bureau of Programs, which is administered by the U.S.I.A. director, a political appointee, under the broad guidelines of the Smith-Mundt Act: "The Secretary [Director] is authorized when he finds it appropriate to provide for the preparation and dissemination abroad of information about the United States, its people and its policies." It is not surprising that

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Charles Wick, the egregious director of U.S.I.A., and Leslie Lenkowsky, a neoconservative ideologue, took those guidelines and ran.

Still, the politicization of AmParts was first encouraged not by Reagan's appointees, but by Carter's reorganization. Despite Carter's 1978 executive order, the AmParts selection process involved a kind of political vetting. There was no weekly review process by political appointees as there would be under Reagan; the selection and approval of speakers were up to career officials. But notecards were kept on the qualifications and political inclinations of proposed participants. A yellow file box still used by program officers in the Latin America division, for example, contains cards from the Carter years with comments like, "anti-Carter" for one academic now serving on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "sounded pro-Administration" for Latin America specialist Patricia Fagen, and "considered conservative" for University of Virginia professor David Jordan. An invitation issued to Kenneth Adelman by a U.S.I.A. program officer to participate in a two-week speaking tour of Africa was subsequently withdrawn without explanation. Adelman, now the head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, believes that the decision to cancel the trip was made because of articles he had written in *Foreign Affairs* and TNR that were critical of Carter Administration policies in Africa.

THE REAGAN Administration formalized this review process for the AmParts program by establishing a list of proposed speakers, which was circulated each week among political appointees. The procedure began in the summer of 1981 after four American economists touring Japan courtesy of AmParts were reported in a U.S.I.A. cable to have been "uniform in their criticism of U.S. economic policies and skeptical of the effectiveness of supply-side economics. . . ." Upset by the news, U.S.I.A. Associate Director John Hughes ordered a weekly review to prevent future embarrassments. "What I need . . . is a list of those speakers who are ABOUT TO BE CHOSEN," Hughes wrote emphatically to Deputy Associate Director Gifford Malone in August 1981. "This will give me the opportunity to take a look at the list, do a little screening before commitments are made." As career officers saw the people rejected by Wick, Lenkowsky, Hughes, and other political appointees, they compiled the "blacklist," as it came to be known after *Washington Post* reporter Howard Kurtz wrote a story about it.

But the list was widely misunderstood. It was certainly not on the order of a McCarthy blacklist or a Nixon enemies list. Nor was it even a tool used by conservatives to keep liberals out of the overseas speaking program. According to U.S.I.A. officials familiar with the AmParts upheaval, it was a defensive move on the part of career officers who feared reprisal from political appointees if they proposed names that had already been rejected. The list reflected the judgment of career officers about the partisanship of the top U.S.I.A. appointees.

Other than the political backlash, the actual results of the "blacklist" and weekly review lists were not that much different from those of the Carter Administration's review process. In response to the charges of political malfeasance, a U.S.I.A. inspection team (composed of career officers, not political appointees) took a comparative sampling of about a fourth of all AmParts participants during two years: 1979 and 1983. It found that in 1979, under the Carter Administration, twenty-one AmParts participants were Democrats and six were Republicans. In 1983, under the Reagan Administration, twenty-one were Republicans and fourteen were Democrats. Even allowing for the errors of unscientific sampling, it seems clear that partisanship—to the degree partisanship can be identified—has been the rule in AmParts under Democratic and Republican Presidents alike. Moreover, in the two-and-a-half years the list of rejected speakers was in circulation, approximately 1,500 speakers traveled overseas on programs; only 95 names were on the list. The inspection team concluded that 38 of those were rejected for expressly political reasons.

Which is not to say that Congress should have overlooked the evidence, presented during the confirmation hearings, that Mr. Lenkowsky lied about when he learned of the "blacklist," and that he acquiesced in the shredding of copies of it. (In the only authentic example of Nixonian paranoia to be found in the scandal, U.S.I.A. General Counsel Thomas Harvey ordered the weekly review lists and copies of the "blacklist" destroyed after Warren Unna, a freelance journalist, and Howard Kurtz requested copies of them. Lenkowsky was alleged to have been present when this order was given.) Doubtless, the names revealed on surviving copies of the list—including Walter Cronkite, Gary Hart, and Coretta Scott King—gave the issue a certain notoriety. But Lenkowsky never said that political considerations had not influenced his choice of AmParts speakers—only that partisanship had not been his sole consideration. Whether Lenkowsky was telling the truth or not, the fact is that Carter's reorganization gave him ample room to act in a partisan fashion.

NOW CONGRESS is trying to figure out how to repair AmParts. If its portion of the U.S.I.A. budget is negligible (one-third of 1 percent), the philosophical question hovering over it is not: How should debate in American society be represented abroad? It could be reasonably argued that a government in power has every right to send abroad only speakers who support its policies. (A separate program that would sponsor "Presidential speakers" has been informally discussed at U.S.I.A.) But every Administration, Reagan's included, has expressed a desire for balance, if not objectivity, in overseas speakers programs. The best way to pursue balance is to make sure that the Administration isn't in charge of achieving it.

Congress should recall the long-standing debate over—and resistance to—politicization of overseas educational

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programs, a debate summarized in a recent article for *The Fletcher Forum* by U.S.I.A. career officer Louis Roth. In 1952 Robert Stozier, a dean at the University of Chicago, asked Congress to keep education and politics separate: "If the program is to be pursued in the adventuresome American tradition that ideas and learning are the source of our material greatness, then we must conduct it free from contradictory political pressure and conduct it as an educational enterprise." As far as AmParts is concerned, that mission has been compromised under both the Carter and Reagan Administrations. The selection of participants should be made by a panel of career officers and scholars whose focus is on diversity and quality rather than on politics, partisanship, or propaganda.

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

An experiment that worked, sort of.

LABOR'S LESSONS

AT NINE O'CLOCK on the evening of June 5—the night Walter Mondale locked up the Democratic Party's Presidential nomination—Mondale Campaign Manager Bob Beckel clambered onto the podium at the Town and Campus Inn in West Orange, New Jersey, to claim victory in that day's primary. "We won tonight because we had the support of those people who want a nuclear freeze," Beckel told the silent crowd. "We won because we had the support of those people who want the E.R.A. ratified." More silence. "And we won because we had the support of organized labor"—at which the room burst into cheers. On Fritz Mondale's triumphant night, as so many other times during the campaign, labor was there for their candidate—labor and nobody else.

The irony is that for the first time since Vietnam split the liberal-labor bloc apart, the A.F.L.-C.I.O. has been trying not to go it alone. The Kirkland era has seen the federation abandon much of the political suspiciousness—centrist sectarianism, it might be called—that characterized George Meany's tenure. And yet, in its institutional composition, Mondale's campaign has resembled nothing more than the 1968 campaign of Hubert Humphrey. Now, as then, labor was the field operation. "Mondale's an A.F.L.-C.I.O. production," says the political director of one county federation in a tone less gleeful than appalled. "Without labor, he'd have gone the way of John Glenn."

Certainly the A.F.L.-C.I.O. endorsement meant that even at his nadir, Mondale retained a solid base of support. By any measure, labor played a key role in Mondale's victories in Iowa, Alabama, Michigan, Illinois, New York, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, New Jersey, and even Texas. In state after state, Mondale's union household vote has run 5 to 10 percent higher than his support from all voters paid an hourly wage. Nationally, union household voters have comprised 33 percent of the Democratic primary electorate, even though they constitute only 30 percent of registered party members. Moreover, according to a *New York Times* composite of exit polls, they gave Mondale a 45-to-31 edge over Gary Hart. Demonstrably, the unions have been doing something right.

And some things wrong. Mondale lost the labor vote in New England and barely broke even in California. Nowhere have the unions turned out large numbers of volunteers; Walter Mondale's campaign is comprised chiefly of union staff and "paid volunteers" from labor's ranks. In part, of course, the problem is Mondale; but the problem is labor, too.

No one should have expected otherwise. The very intent of labor's involvement in the 1984 campaign is precisely to arrest its alarming decline. For today's unions, politics looks like the last arena in which they can reverse the losses they have suffered across the bargaining table, in representation elections, in court decisions, and, more broadly, in public esteem and membership support. Yet the clearest lesson that emerges from the unions' plunge into primary politics is that every problem they entered this arena to alleviate has pursued them into politics as well. Far from solving labor's problems, the 1984 campaign has underscored what labor needs to do: empower its members, democratize its procedures, rebuild its image. In four distinct ways, the need for these changes was underscored along the 1984 primary campaign trail.

THE LIMITS OF SOLIDARITY POLITICS: If nothing else, labor's campaign for Walter Mondale provided the definitive answer to the question of whether members will vote for a candidate chiefly to help their unions. They won't.

The peculiarly themeless campaign Mondale waged in the period before the Hart challenge left labor with little direction for its own campaign. What emerged was a campaign that stressed both narrow union issues and the broadest labor issue of all: solidarity. "The way I used to sell it," says Nancy Shier, AFSCME's political director in Illinois, "was, 'Labor is on the line. The labor movement is under attack and has decided to fight back on the political front.' And I hardly talked at all about Mondale. This went over with the leadership, but it doesn't work with the rank and file. We didn't have anything to say to the members that worked until we started campaigning against Hart."

But when Gary Hart began attacking union leaders, the instinctive response of at least some of them was to try even harder to rally the members in defense of the institution. "United we stand, Divided we fall," the president of the Massachusetts A.F.L.-C.I.O. proclaimed in a last-minute mailing to his membership, which proceeded to vote for Hart. "We must let the leaders of our government know that the labor movement is alive and well and dedicated to preserving hard-won gains inherited from those

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who have gone before us." The pitch for Mondale could hardly have been more oblique. Worse, the formula defined the election as a referendum on the institution of labor—a referendum labor cannot currently win "even with our own members," in the estimate of Skip Roberts, a National Education Association political staffer. The problem is what labor has come to mean. "When our rank and file thinks of labor," says Nancy Mills, who heads the avowedly feminist leadership of a nurses' local in Massachusetts, "they think of Kirkland and Meany, not us. Labor is the guys with the big cigars."

None of this comes as news to the more perceptive of labor's political directors. "Members seldom vote on union issues," says Jan Pierce, political director of the Communications Workers in the Northeast. "They vote on general issues like everyone else." Indeed, where unions succeeded this spring, it was where they abandoned the institutional defense and waged a campaign contrasting Mondale and Hart—not just on labor issues like the Chrysler bailout, where Hart was depicted as believing workers sometimes need to bear the brunt of the dislocations arising from an economy in transition, but also on general issues like the nuclear build-down. "It's too late to make a solidarity pitch for Mondale," says Pat Jackson, political director for the Service Employees in California. "Members won't vote organizationally. We lost that battle ten or twenty years ago."

THE LIMITS OF TOP-DOWN POLITICS: "When Kennedy dropped out," says the president of a major international, "everyone said, 'It's Mondale,' without bothering to discover the attitudes of the members." To be sure, the endorsement was conceived late and delivered early, and there was neither time nor precedent for putting in place a reasonably democratic process in the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s ninety-six member internationals. But however innocently technical the reasons for the top-down endorsement may have been, the endorsement may have proved as much a disincentive as an inducement to involvement on the part of ordinary members. "They should know by now," said one California-based international vice-president on the eve of a primary that had seen virtually no volunteer participation, "that they motivate the rank and file better when the rank and file decides."

The problem is, top-down endorsements pervade union politics. Endorsements for such local-level candidates as members of Congress come from the internationals and the state federations, not the locals. Political mailings come from state and county rather than local leaders, even though members can identify local leaders and don't know the state officials. Political funds are generally controlled from the top. The result is the atrophy of politics at the local level. "Local leadership doesn't perceive politics as part of its job," says one international political staffer who ran labor's campaign for Mondale in several states. The magnitude of this problem is such that a mere national A.F.L.-C.I.O. endorsement can't change matters greatly. "I can't say by virtue of the endorsement locals have become active," says the president of one of the nation's largest county federations. "It all depends on local leadership."

Indeed, in many of the places where labor was most effective this year, it is because the political message was carried by the lowest level of union leadership—the shop steward. The "one-on-one" program, as it's informally called, supplements the usual union mail and phone contact with a program where the shop steward talks with each of his members at the work site. The program was first tested in Berlin, New Hampshire, whose paper mill workers broke decisively in Mondale's favor while union members everywhere else in the state were moving just as decisively into the Hart column. Later, it was used primarily in New York and Pennsylvania, where it helped roll up the Mondale majority. "The shop steward," says the C.W.A.'s Jan Pierce, who is largely responsible for the implementation of the program in the Northeast, "is the person closest to the member, has the best rapport, and is absolutely the most effective at breaking down the notion that the leadership is directing the membership on how to vote." It is a hopeful development that the A.F.L.-C.I.O. itself has picked up the program in some areas, and that the Service Employees are inaugurating a political stewards program within their locals.

THE LIMITS OF SERVICE-SECTOR POLITICS: Walter Mondale emerges from the primary season as less the unionists' candidate than the blue-collar unionists' candidate—and that, too, describes labor's problems no less than Mondale's. In Illinois, for instance, Mondale took 46 percent of the blue-collar union vote to 26 percent for Hart. They split the white-collar union vote 32-32. In California, Mondale took 40 percent of the blue-collar union vote to 32 percent for Hart. Hart won the white-collar union vote, 42 to 31. One Iowa poll taken on the eve of last February's caucuses—well before the Chrysler bailout had become the rhetorical center of Mondale's campaign—showed U.A.W. members supporting Mondale at a rate 30 percent higher than the state average. N.E.A. members were at that average.

Three distinct problems confront union political programs as industrial unions decline and those in the service and professional sectors expand. The first is the shift in heavy industry to greater concentration in defense. There are many more U.A.W. members in California, for instance, building bombers than building cars, and this has moved the membership based there considerably nearer to Ronald Reagan. The second is the difficulty of reaching unionized professionals on any but the narrowest of issues. Thus, while the volume of the N.E.A.'s activity for Mondale has been unsurpassed, the substance has been confined to praising Mondale's record on education. Any broader issue discussion, the N.E.A. leaders are convinced, would alienate their members. The third is the high rate of job turnover and low rate of voter registration in service-sector unions such as the retail clerks, many of whose members, for instance, are financing their educa-

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tions with supermarket jobs. Annual turnover rates of 25 percent are common in clerks locals, which makes political programs extremely difficult. Though some locals have had a modicum of success with quasi-permanent voter registration programs, even they have not yet addressed the problem of how to inculcate the culture and politics of unionism in a proletariat that's just passing through.

THE LIMITS OF NEOLIBERALISM'S APPROACH TO LABOR: In the polarization of both voting patterns and rhetoric in this year's primaries, the Democratic Party seemed to be falling into a virtual intra-party class war. For the past decade, American unions have been the targets of a sustained ideological and public relations attack from a corporate sector whose response to the slowing growth of the American economy has been to seek an upward redistribution of income at the expense of American workers. This year, labor's pre-convention endorsement opened the door for negative stereotypes of unions and union leaders to find their way into the Democratic primary process. It is a decidedly more ominous development than the labor-liberal rift over Vietnam. Some of the New Politics leaders of that time distinguished between the positive effects of unions' contributions to the economy and society on the one hand and the awful effects of their support for the war on the other. Such distinctions have been blurred on the campaign trail this year, as unions have been lumped with the likes of Eddie Vrdolyak, special interests looking out only for themselves. Unions need to remind their fellow Democrats that, to the contrary, they remain the most important force in this society for much of the agenda that is dear to liberals, neo and paleo alike. It is the unions, for instance, that are winning the comparable worth settlements in the courts, raising the living standards of working women in and out of unions. It is the mobilized, militant rank and file of the Machinists Union that has forced on Eastern Airlines an arrangement that will improve Eastern productivity in return for genuine worker participation in management decisions and a share of the profits. More broadly, it is the unions, the Machinists and Auto Workers in particular, that have produced those re-industrialization plans weighted most heavily toward participatory democracy.

For all their faults, unions remain the one major agency in American politics for a more democratized economy and a more equitable distribution of income. To pass over this detail in one's zeal to attack special interests is to play right into the conservatives' hands. After all, virtually every Democratic member of Congress in a tight race will be aided, properly and legally, by union PAC money this fall, and will pay accordingly for the campaign Hart waged against the legitimacy of union contributions.

Was all this grief avoidable? By ignoring Samuel Gompers's ancient dictum that labor's proper role is to reward its friends and punish its enemies, did labor convert one-time friends into foes? That was the argument of Sheet Metal Workers' president Edward J. Carlaugh, whose union stood alone in the A.F.L.-C.I.O. in opposing the unified endorsement. And even if the endorsement did expose labor and Mondale to much more criticism than either had anticipated, did labor produce enough to offset the flak? In short, did it help—Mondale and labor both—more than it hurt?

In Mondale's case, the answer, by however narrow a margin, is probably yes. Certainly Mondale's managers make it clear that if they had it to do over again they'd still take the endorsement. Labor's case is a closer call, in which a political victory must be weighed against a public relations debacle. But here too it is significant that almost no one within labor's leadership, not even among those who have criticized this year's process as undemocratic and inefficient, wants to jettison the endorsement come 1988. It is not that union leaders think they won't be attacked next time out—that would require a sea change in both the political climate and labor's standing that few foresee. Indeed, many think that the attacks will persist whether the endorsement comes from a unified A.F.L.-C.I.O. or from the individual international—so why not go for whatever marginal benefits a federation-wide endorsement may produce? After all, class divisions within both the nation and the party were building long before the A.F.L.-C.I.O. announced its intention to endorse, and the voting patterns in this year's primaries show a polarization along income lines that would have been there even without the unified endorsement. Seen in this light, the intra-party attacks on labor appear to a number of leaders to be less a function of the endorsement than of the times, and the endorsement, correspondingly, comes to seem only a natural response to what one international's political director calls "prolonged class war inside the Democratic Party." This view tends to underestimate the degree to which the endorsement has sharpened that class war, perhaps not necessarily to labor's ultimate advantage. Nevertheless, there will almost surely be an endorsement again in '88—"Though next time," says one vice president of a major international, "we ask all the candidates in our interviews what they think of labor and whether they'll attack us if they don't get the endorsement—and we'll videotape their answers."

It is conceivable, of course, that labor will draw the worst possible lesson from Mondale's nomination and revert to the strategic myopia that prevailed in the twilight of the Meany years, when then-COPE director Al Barkan stumped the nation preaching that labor could go it alone. But labor's experiences in the '84 campaign have been too searing to make this the likeliest of outcomes. There are many in the movement who have emerged from this process with a chastened assessment of labor's capacities and a clearer sense of how to expand them. If they prevail, the endorsement will have been worth it.

HAROLD MEYERSON

Harold Meyerson, who was labor liaison in Alan Cranston's Presidential campaign, is a Los Angeles-based writer and political consultant.

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POST CARD

IN TRANSIT

Ho Chi Minh City

IN THE PLACE once called Saigon, the very shade and smell of an American seems to unsettle the air. One feels one is disturbing private hopes put to sleep nearly ten years ago by people who had to alter a whole course of life. The director of the old Majestic Hotel is startled to see a pale face and an American passport. "Very impolite to say we cannot accept you." When I object, she telephones the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An agitated little man appears. "I must take you to my leader," he says—those are really his words.

The consular officer to whom I am taken confirms there is a new relaxation of regulations. Foreigners in transit to Cambodia are no longer required to spend their two days confined to the airport hotel. "You are the first to benefit."

On the street, a free bird for two days and nights, I feel as though I had sent out a high-pitched call. Street urchins trip over themselves trying to press tiny bags of peanuts into my hands. The braided leg muscles of a young cyclo driver tense up. "I wait for you," he announces, eager to arouse his sleeping English. No longer under official orders to dismiss me, the hotel director allows herself one question. "What is your profession, social agency?" My reply evokes the sheer glee of novelty. "Ooh, a writer! *Fantastique!*"

The cream pitcher is still engraved "Hotel Majestic," but the *café au lait* is served in the crude crockery cups one sees in the dishpans of street vendors. The hotel's façade has been redone under state ownership to read the Cuu Long, but still it sits rather like a haughty French *grand-mère* looking down on the East German cargo ships unloading in the Saigon River. The street trills with cyclo bells. There isn't a sixteenth of an inch of excess flesh on anyone. The girls in their floppy sunhats and long cotton gloves, some in high-heeled sandals, pedal their bicycles impassively home from work.

But when I enter Kong Dai, the main street, my cyclo is tailed two blocks behind by police. The cyclo driver twitches each time I jump out to talk to someone. I ask to stop at the bookstalls. Amid the political tracts are featured old Simplicity pattern books and manuals for American TV circuitry. "What a cruel twist," I mumble at one stall, since no one has TV sets, and the patterns are unavailable. Quite by serendipity, the bookseller speaks English.

"We keep, just to dream," he says.

Perhaps it was my casual American laugh, but it tore at something in the web of lines in his prematurely old face.

"You are maybe the fourth American I see since '75," he says. He used to work for the Americans, for A.I.D., and his wife did too. "I keep my identity secret for almost ten years," he whispers. "I tell them before liberation I am a simple policeman." To keep his mind off politics, he has taught himself four languages. Even the two-year-old daughter behind his stall speaks his tutored French. His wife sits listlessly fanning their new baby, whose face has a fevered purplish cast.

Quickly, furtively, while we pass books back and forth, he paints in the last, gray decade. He has a better life than others—temporarily. "If you wander the streets, you see a lot of people have nothing." But time is running out. More private shops are being closed than ever. The new sellers cannot afford the taxes, $30 a month just for the privilege of operating a business, so they simply quit. He, too, will be forced to take a government job if he can't get out.

"The biggest problem for my family since liberation is sickness," he says. Domestic medicines are ineffective, and black market imported medicines are prohibitively expensive. No one gets enough protein. It is too expensive to burn gas for cooking, so, like most people, they have to eat out in popular shacks. As is common all over Asia, family-run curbside versions of the fast-noodle parlor are the cheapest way to eat.

What is the entertainment at night? I ask.

"To queue up at movie theaters. That's why I have never seen a film since '75." He watches television, that's all. And what would he get on TV? I ask. "The same Soviet and Bulgarian films, over and over." He smiles. *War and Peace* is the perennial. Right now they show films of riots in the streets of Europe protesting American missile deployment. Over and over.

Are people in South Vietnam afraid of nuclear war? I inquire.

"They don't even know what it is." The bookseller looks into the distance, then adds ruefully, "We are already dying, the slow way."

SUDDENLY HIS face shrinks into the shadows. Police. For a crazy moment, he deliberates whether or not to pass me a letter he has sent out with the last three Americans, imploring Washington to add him to the Orderly Departure Program, which was set up jointly by the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to facilitate emigration of Vietnamese who formerly worked for the U.S. forces. Could I come back later? Without my driver?

"I want to do something good for my country," he whispers urgently. "But not for this government. Here, no initiative is possible." His gentle face goes rigid with bitterness. "They cut your throat for initiative."

That evening, the peanut girls demand, "Where you go, what restaurant?" Like everyone else, they are forbidden to associate with me—"because you are from other place," as they succinctly phrase the xenophobia of

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Vietnam. They are the most up-to-the-minute news broadcasters in town. The information they elicit might be useful in protecting them when the police catch them begging.

The restaurants along the Dong Khoi are full. Syrupy swing music leaks out the windows of the one dancing spot, where Western diplomats and U.N. personnel are entertained by Vietnamese hostesses who buy their tickets. Some newcomer always mistakes them for prostitutes until, at 11 P.M., owning themselves utterly, all the Vietnamese hostesses slip out a side door and are gone.

I have been told to look up Madame Dai, no ordinary citizen. Educated in Paris just after World War II, she was the first woman attorney in Vietnam. In 1975 she lost almost everything. Her law practice was shut down. The government confiscated the beautiful villa where she enjoyed throwing large parties for an international potpourri of friends. Her husband, a prominent surgeon, was jailed for several months.

TODAY, the couple lives in Madame Dai's former law office, where she presides over the best restaurant in town. The air is itchy with the decay of the old life, the ocherous law books in dusty cases. But a flicker of insouciance in Madame's eyes suggests the brilliant fiery woman who practiced criminal law for twenty years and criticized every ruler, including our man, Nguyen Van Thieu. Then her heavily powdered face retreats behind a blonde wig, and she speaks of "my hundred children," the Amerasians in her quarter for whom she has started a night school. She pays teachers from contributions charmed out of her foreign clientele.

With dessert, she brings on the guest book and points out the prominent names—an ambassador, a Soviet journalist, a *New York Times* editor—hoarding scraps of status from their attendance at her humbled salon. Her good works also keep down official harassment.

Later, in front of her school, where we can speak under the guise of fund-raising, I ask Madame Dai what quality of personality has allowed her to survive.

"*Beaucoup de courage, et foi à l'avenir*," she says—a lot of courage and faith in the future. "Faith in spite of everything," she adds emphatically. But she is a consummate realist. Too many South Vietnamese she saw in 1975 had "nervous breakdowns" and then were helpless. Madame Dai turned to acupuncture to relieve the tension.

"One must adapt," she asserts. Did many?

"No." She sighs. "The past is no longer here, you live only in the present. You cannot do great things, but you can do *les petites chôses*—little things—well."

Believing, like the bookseller, that her days as a private entrepreneur are numbered, Madame Dai has applied for exit visas to the United States, France, and Canada. No word. She ends our conversation with the correct political line: "The world owes Vietnam financial aid, because it's been a thirty-year victim of war."

Another, more garrulous attorney, also dining at Madame Dai's, is not so sanguine. The situation is very tight, says the lawyer. One must be careful twenty-four hours a day not to say anything critical of the government. When one becomes tired or sick, it's easy to slip, and one is likely to be arrested. The laws are completely reconstituted. If you charge someone with robbing your possessions, the police will say, "If you want us to arrest him, you must pay for his food while he is in jail." But if the police are given information that your ideas are wrong, they become very active indeed. Political sentences are long and pre-fixed.

Are wrongdoers sent away to labor camps in the North?

"Those are the lucky ones," the former lawyer replies. They at least can do physical work. Those kept in prisons occupy cells—the lawyer pointed to two squares of tile on the floor—without enough space to lie down.

My cyclo driver has a surprise for me on the way home. Another cyclo rides parallel to us, and a woman who has obviously dressed in her best reaches out to touch me, speechless.

"She is my mother," the driver says. "She is so happy to see an American, she cannot speak."

Before leaving, I stop back to see the bookseller. He passes me the letter. "I think you are the last American I will see. I try to practice Zen to quiet my spirit." And then, as if a fissure in his control allowed a fraction of the pain to escape, he says, "Jesus Christ, if I cannot get out sooner or later, I will become crazy!"

The Tourist Office sends a driver to whisk me to the airport, through a city of unsmiling, determined faces, no consumer waste, no excess flesh, no trust. It's a city—this time the cant word truly applies—of survivors. I am a free bird, leaving an occupied city. But the bookseller's face stays with me. By choosing to hide his American connection for so long, in order to survive, he was unable to join the long line of people applying for Orderly Departure, a program now winding down. He and his family had quite literally missed the boat.

Postscript. Back in New York, the very day I write this, I receive an ecstatic letter from the bookseller. He's heard twice from Washington in response to the letter he gave me, which I'd forwarded. He was hopeful of being accepted for Orderly Departure. "Please consider me as a young brother," he wrote, "always needing you badly to guide our way to the world, a world I still believe full of ideal beauty."

GAIL SHEEHY

Gail Sheehy is the author of *Passages* and *Pathfinders*. She is at work on a book about child survivors of social, political, and family upheaval. "Postcard," a new department, will feature occasional short reports from exotic places.

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Starrett City achieves integration through preferential treatment for whites.

DOUBLE REVERSE DISCRIMINATION

BY JEFFERSON MORLEY

WHAT WAS fifteen years ago a garbage dump on the eastern edge of Brooklyn is now Starrett City, the country's largest federally subsidized, middle-income housing project. Fifteen thousand people live in its forty-six buildings. Kids play on the grassy plazas amid the tan brick high-rises, and young mothers chat on the benches. A shopping center in the middle of the project has a Waldbaum's, a medical center, a Fayva shoe store; it is busy with shoppers even on a Sunday morning. But one of the most impressive things about Starrett City is also one of the most troubling: it is racially integrated. Impressive because white and black people peacefully live side by side all too infrequently. Troubling because only one thing keeps Starrett City integrated, and that is the management's use of "occupancy controls"—a policy of limiting black and Hispanic tenants to around 40 percent of the total. Starrett City thrives on the paradox of achieving integration by discriminating against blacks.

You could not invent a better test of the affirmative action principle than Starrett City. The only way to be philosophically consistent in judging the rightness of occupancy controls is to be racially disinterested. Should conservatives applaud Starrett City for protecting middle-class city dwellers or condemn it for violating the ideal that society be color blind? Should liberals support Starrett because integration is a worthy goal, or oppose it for discriminating against blacks? Some liberals deny that affirmative action is reverse discrimination against whites. But they can't deny that blacks shut out of Starrett City *are* victims of discrimination—double reverse discrimination. More importantly, though, those who insist that "affirmative discrimination" (Nathan Glazer's phrase) is in the interests of neither blacks nor whites must confront a vivid example of why it is in the interests of both.

On May 2 the Federal District Court in Brooklyn decided that society could live with Starrett's paradox. It approved an out-of-court settlement between Starrett City and five black rental applicants, represented by the N.A.A.C.P. and others, who filed a class action discrimination suit in 1979. Under the settlement, Starrett can maintain its occupancy controls, although it must rent an additional 3 percent of its 5,881 apartments to minority families by 1989. As part of the same settlement, the State of New York has pledged to expand traditional affirmative action. It will increase minority tenancy to 20 percent at eighty-six other publicly assisted projects in the city by 1999. In addition, the plaintiffs and all others on Starrett's waiting list will be notified of openings at the other projects.

In one sense the settlement is nothing new. Occupancy controls are a color-conscious policy philosophically identical to many affirmative action programs. With the aim of ending society's racial divisions, occupancy controls make distinctions based on race. But like a photographic negative, the Starrett City case neatly reverses the places of black and white, and forces us to think about the affirmative action debate in a new way.

The Starrett City story begins with the end of liberal illusion. In 1972 Starrett City Associates, a limited investor's partnership, was organized to finance a proposed housing project located on a large tract of unused land between the black poor neighborhood of East New York and the white working-class neighborhood of Canarsie. But the residents of Canarsie fiercely opposed the project, saying it would bring the ghetto closer to their doorsteps. This wasn't an unreasonable fear. East New York had gone from two-thirds white to three-quarters black between 1960 and 1970 and had deteriorated in the process, its property values plummeting and its crime rate rising.

Starrett faced up to the recent unhappy experience of many New York City housing projects. If the minority population at Starrett grew much larger than 30 percent, Starrett would almost certainly "tip"—whites would begin to move out, at first slowly, and then more and more rapidly until all whites, except the elderly on Social Security, were gone. Starrett was sure to attract black tenants. But if it wanted a stable middle-income project, it had to attract—and keep—a larger number of whites. Integration was a practical necessity, an admirable idea, and an unlikely prospect.

Starrett considered—and rejected—three solutions and settled on a fourth.

First, it recognized that a simple policy of nondiscrimination wouldn't work. Choosing tenants on a first-come, first-served basis from an applicant pool with a sizable fraction of blacks would eventually result in segregation.

Second, it knew that even the most sincere intentions to maintain integration would not prevent tipping. The proof was right down the street in Linden Plaza, a middle-income project that opened in 1975. Linden Plaza started out more than half black, well over the generally accepted 30 percent "tipping point." It pledged to stay integrated; nevertheless, within four years it became 95 percent black.

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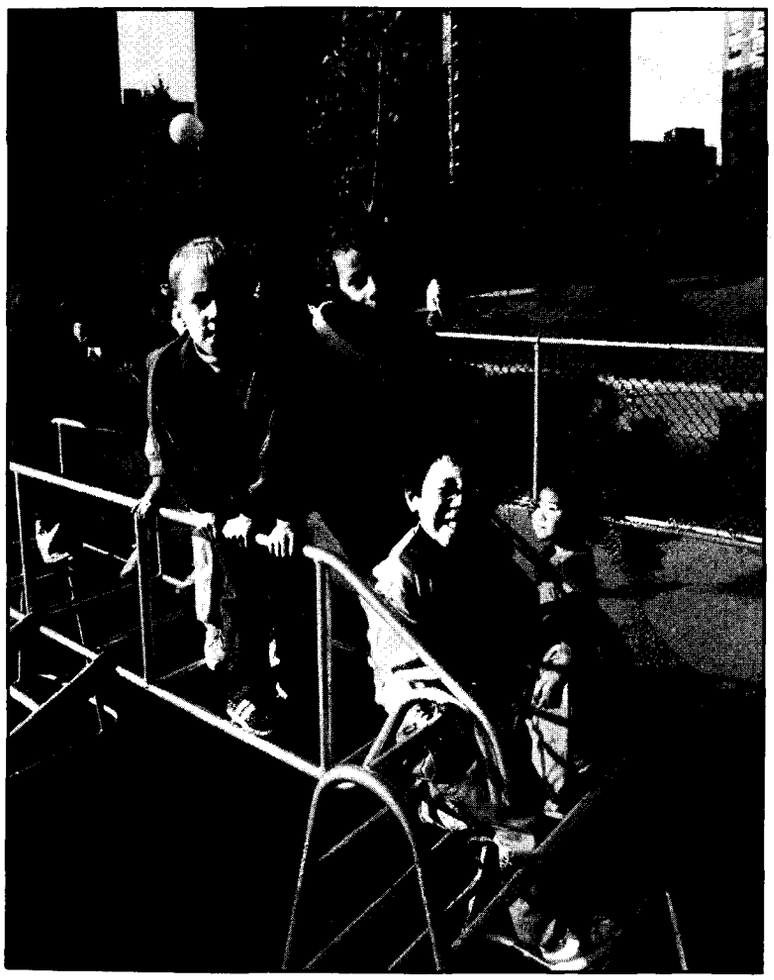
Even though Linden Plaza, after tipping, had a higher average household income than Starrett City, it was engulfed in crime, vandalism, and management neglect, while Starrett remained relatively safe and clean. The reasons for this are complex: middle-class blacks show higher crime rates than their white counterparts. Residents and security guards are more reluctant to report crime and criminals in all-black projects than in integrated projects. And middle-class black households are more likely than white households to have both parents working full-time, which means less supervision of adolescents who are responsible for most crime and vandalism. No wonder Starrett City was, in the words of a Department of Housing and Urban Development report in 1974, "singularly driven to achieve an occupancy that is 70 percent white."

Third, Starrett realized from the beginning that it would have to go beyond affirmative action in its original sense—that is, seeking out members of a targeted racial group without extending preferential treatment to them. Starrett did make an extensive effort to attract white applicants. Ads in ethnic neighborhood newspapers emphasized Starrett's stability and safety, terms calculated to ease racial apprehensions. Amenities such as indoor tennis courts and lobbies lined with Italian marble were also highlighted. But there was no illusion that such niceties would prevent tipping.



CHILDREN AT A STARRETT CITY PLAYGROUND

A deeper realization underlay all of Starrett's assumptions. The uniformity and sickening speed which characterized the tipping phenomena could not be solely explained by white racism. Rather, it was undeniable that the social disorganization afflicting largely black populations—unsupervised youth, discouraged workers, and above all, a higher crime rate—simply became intolerable at some point to their white neighbors. White fears might originate in racism and might be worsened by it, but they were also fed by the reality of muggings. It was Nathan Glazer who most forcefully made the point in the early 1970s that whites' fears of blacks were profound and in many ways justified. Middle-class blacks, of course, have many of these same fears but fewer opportunities to live elsewhere.

Starrett had an answer: it would make sure too many whites didn't leave by making sure too many blacks didn't get in. It delayed opening buildings because there were not enough qualified white applicants to maintain the 70 percent goal. (Starrett carefully monitors the race of outgoing tenants. It has since let the white population drop down to 59 percent without tipping.) By the summer of 1981, minorities constituted three-quarters of Starrett's waiting list but only two-fifths of its tenants. A qualified black family on the list had to wait about twenty months for a two-bedroom apartment. A white family had to wait two months. In defense of integration, Starrett's weapon of last resort was preferential treatment for whites.

What makes the Starrett dilemma especially difficult is that the stakes go beyond the project itself. Without occupancy controls, Starrett would tip—within four years, according to Oscar Newman, a well-known urban planner and consultant to Starrett. Blacks who had hoped to leave the ghetto might well find that it had caught up with them. But because of the pervasiveness of housing discrimination, they would find it far harder than their white neighbors to move on again to better neighborhoods. One pleasant area blacks might be able to move into would be nearby Canarsie, where increasingly apprehensive whites might begin to move out. Canarsie itself might approach the tipping point, and the whole devastating downward spiral of urban decline could begin yet again.

No one got caught between principles more prominently than Starrett's lawyer, Morris B. Abram. Starrett hired Abram in 1979 when the five blacks sued for discrimination. Abram had first become well known in the 1960s when he was a lawyer for Martin Luther King Jr. and numerous civil rights causes. More recently he had made a name for himself with his emphatic opposition to reverse

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discrimination, which he said amounted to racial quotas. His stand prompted President Reagan to name him to the United States Civil Rights Commission in 1983.

There is simply no way to reconcile Abram's opposition to quotas with his defense of Starrett. In January 1980 Abram wrote a categorical denunciation of preferential treatment in *Commentary*. He chastised the "leading elements of the civil rights community" who "baldly claimed the rightness and legality of imposed goals or quotas for identified members of disadvantaged groups." Race, he said, was an "absurd, unfair, and counterproductive" basis for treating people, and it was a "total reversal of form" for liberals who had supported the color-blind ideals of the civil rights movement to employ it.

In his own total reversal of form, Abram had agreed one month before in December 1979 to defend occupancy controls. As the case approached trial, he filed papers asserting the rightness and legality of Starrett's quota:

> Race remains a significant factor in our society. . . . In the circumstances that actually confront Starrett City today, race-conscious tenant selection methods are the only way in which to preserve an integrated community.

Voicing the convictions of leading elements of the civil rights movement, Justice Thurgood Marshall had made the same argument in his dissent in the *Bakke* case—although not quite as baldly.

> It is because of a legacy of unequal treatment that we now must permit the institutions of this society to give consideration to race. . . . If we are ever to become a fully integrated society, . . . we must be willing.

It's worth examining Abram's apparent about-face in some detail. Are quotas acceptable to Abram at Starrett City because they benefit whites instead of blacks? Of course not. Why then? Abram declined to talk to me for this article, but he did tell Ann Mariano of *The Washington Post* that Starrett's preferential treatment was permissible because it did not "restrict and assign people of lesser qualifications into opportunities denied people of more qualifications on the grounds of race." In other words, where "qualifications" are not a factor, it *is* permissible to make color-conscious choices.

Abram's explanation only underlines the contradiction he is trying to resolve. In the pages of *Commentary* and in the halls of Congress, Abram has never offered the slightest hint that housing, or decisions not involving qualifications could constitute legitimate areas of race-conscious decision-making. And his unequivocal language leaves no room for any unspecified exceptions. As recently as June 12 Abram wrote an attack on affirmative action in *The Wall Street Journal*, saying that the American people "do not believe that racial distinctions should have any place in our laws or public practice, or that persons should be judged on the basis of the group to which they belong." He did not mention Starrett City in the article.

Despite Abram's implication in the *Post*, qualifications of a sort *are* a part of Starrett's selection process. To qualify for an apartment at Starrett City, applicants must meet a minimum income requirement of about $10,000 per year. Occupancy controls still give preference to a white applicant who makes $15,000 a year over a black applicant who earns $17,000. In this case, the white is less qualified to pay the rent; the more qualified black is denied the opportunity to move into Starrett City on the grounds of race. If Abram followed the logic of his explanation to the *Post*, he would have represented the black plaintiffs, not Starrett.

One might rightly respond that once the two applicants prove they are qualified to pay the rent, it is irrelevant who makes more above the minimum. This would require refining Abram's formulation to something like: in cases in which added qualifications don't make a real difference—where minimum qualifications have been met—color-conscious decisions are O.K. But this wouldn't resolve Abram's inconsistency either. Say that the white and the black applying to live at Starrett both work as security guards, and that they both also apply for jobs as police officers. The white does better on the tests, but both demonstrate the minimum abilities to do the job. Under this logic it would be permissible, not to lower the minimum, but to hire the less qualified black for the sake of some pressing social objective, e.g., an integrated police force.

Of course qualifications figure less importantly in picking a tenant than in, say, picking a brain surgeon. And additional qualifications above and beyond the required minimum are often important. But qualifications can also be easily exaggerated. It is difficult to say with any precision, for example, what additional qualifications will make for a better lawyer. Take a white law school applicant who scores 600 on the law school entrance exam and a black who scores 590. The white's better qualifications are conceivably less valuable to society than the presence of one more black lawyer. There are also cases where additional qualifications are ignored altogether because we choose to reward other values. Veteran's preferences, admissions for alumni children, and college football recruiting are three uncontroversial examples. And there are the many cases where qualifications are so necessary and clear cut that they must take precedence over racial considerations. Abram's basic case on behalf of Starrett City still applies. Racial considerations can be important enough to justify taking race into account. This, of course, is exactly what the supporters of affirmative action contend: it is permissible to be color conscious in the service of an overriding social goal. Abram's defense of Starrett profoundly subverts the neoconservative position on quotas.

BUT DEFENDERS of affirmative action shouldn't throw too many stones at Abram. The N.A.A.C.P.'s role is equally inconsistent. Why did the N.A.A.C.P. go to court to abolish the sort of color-conscious policy it had supported in the *Bakke* case and elsewhere? Was it because this time quotas benefited whites, and not blacks? James Meyerson, a former N.A.A.C.P. attorney who represented the plaintiffs, argues that occupancy controls are inherently different than affirmative action. Starrett's quota, Meyerson says, is "stigmatizing and exclusionary," de-

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signed to keep out blacks, while traditional affirmative action employs "inclusionary quotas," designed to bring in the previously excluded.

This is a distinction without a difference. Traditional affirmative action is also "exclusionary," at least for those whites who would not be hired or admitted to law school because of it. And occupancy controls at Starrett City can be viewed as "inclusionary"—for whites and, notably, for blacks who would otherwise not get to live in an integrated community. Inclusion and exclusion are merely the two faces of any kind of preferential treatment. The whole premise of affirmative action is that the benefits of racial inclusion to society outweigh the damages of exclusion to individuals. Starrett was committed to maximum integration—that is, the maximum amount of inclusion. As occupancy controls were the crucial instrument to that end, they were a model of affirmative action.

Meyerson is right that occupancy controls are "stigmatizing." They are based on the judgment that Starrett would deteriorate if only blacks lived there. There are two possible objections to this unpleasant assumption. One holds that it is wrong and racist, and therefore an illegal basis for public decision-making. The plaintiffs in the Starrett case made this point, though not very convincingly. It is realistic, not racist, to believe that an all-black community in Starrett City would probably suffer more serious social problems than an integrated one. The other objection holds that, whether or not the assumption is correct, Starrett's quota does not treat applicants as individuals but as undifferentiated blacks, thereby violating their rights.

The N.A.A.C.P. and the plaintiffs made this point too, and it only compounded their difficulties. They argued that, whatever the group benefits of integration, individual blacks should not have to suffer to achieve it. As the plaintiffs put it in their concluding argument: "This case is not . . . one of conflict between those supporting integration and those opposing it. . . . The question is whether integration, as the defendants arbitrarily define it, can justify the costs and burdens the black plaintiffs here are being asked to bear." This was not an unfamiliar argument. It was just an uncomfortable one for the N.A.A.C.P. to be offering: substitute "white" for "black," and you have the essence of Abram's usual argument against affirmative action—which the N.A.A.C.P. had long opposed.

To reject the legitimacy of group judgments as the basis of public decisions is to reject the legitimacy of affirmative action. After all, traditional affirmative action doesn't require any individual black to prove discrimination in order to reap the benefits of affirmative action; it doesn't require that any individual white be shown to be guilty of discrimination in order for him or her to be denied benefits he or she might otherwise obtain.

The long and ugly history of exclusion of blacks makes the N.A.A.C.P.'s position more understandable but no less contradictory. The justification for treating individuals as undifferentiated members of a group (in eminent domain decisions, progressive income tax codes, and affirmative action programs) is not simply to distribute benefits to politically preferred groups. If it were, the N.A.A.C.P. would be saying that affirmative action is, and should be, nothing more than aid to blacks. Given the history of racism, society will usually choose not to make group judgments that impose additional "costs and burdens" on individual blacks. But it is perfectly within the spirit of affirmative action to do so for some compelling purpose.

THUS, THE implications of the plaintiffs' case undermined affirmative action on an even more fundamental level. Critics of affirmative action often assert that we should conceive of our society, not as a collection of groups with varying claims, but as a collection of individuals with rights. By siding with the plaintiffs, the N.A.A.C.P. recognized the force of this argument. To put group claims ahead of individual rights *is* unfair, especially when the groups are defined by color alone; no matter how good the intentions are, putting aside the principle of color blindness hurts. If nothing else, the Starrett case ought to give advocates of affirmative action a deeper appreciation of why Allen Bakke, Brian Weber, and other whites have felt unjustly treated by traditional affirmative action, and have gone to court in protest.

But Neoconservatives themselves, in their writings on other subjects, have provided two of the best arguments for recognizing the importance of group claims.

The first argument is practicality. Neoconservatism's defense of urban ethnic communities is (at its best) a defense of old-fashioned institutions like neighborhoods. Communities in a city are said to be more than just collections of individuals. They are more akin to organisms whose complex workings ought not be taken for granted. Imposing lofty plans, such as busing for school integration, however well-intentioned, can do irreparable damage. It seems in this spirit that Abram recognized that rigid adherence to the worthy principle of color blindness at Starrett City made no sense. It might well condemn a model community to segregation and deterioration.

Starrett City, though, is not the only place in the United States where suspending the color-blind principle is justified. Abram—and his colleagues in the Reagan Administration who believe in the color-blind principle—ought to examine the practical limitations of that principle in other situations as well. Color blindness can do real damage to fragile and worthy black communities like East New York by rejecting an obvious method of redressing the legacy of racism—as well as to white communities like Canarsie threatened by the problems of the black community.

The second neoconservative argument that is ironically useful in defending affirmative action is more philosophical. Neoconservatives often lament the expansion of individual rights. Their point is that "rights" have become a sign of confused thinking, or worse, a cover for selfishness and sloth. As Abram put it in another attack on affirmative action on June 11 in *The New York Times Magazine*, "the new [civil rights] movement treated economic claims as civil rights, by embracing an idea of 'rights' that included economic entitlements—a 'right' to shelter, a 'right' to

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health care, a 'right' to day care for children." The other half of this argument asserts that instead of claiming our rights extend ever further, we ought to be accepting more social responsibilities. It would seem reasonable to temper the right to always be treated in a color-blind manner with the responsiblity of sometimes paying a real price for a more racially just community. Abram demanded that the black plaintiffs in the Starrett case pay a real price. Is it really "absurd, unfair, and counterproductive" to demand that white people sometimes pay a price too?

The final irony of the Starrett case is that nobody will own up to the setttlement—even though it is the logical extension of what all sides believe. If you believe in preserving and enhancing urban neighborhoods and housing projects, you have to support Starrett, and if you support Starrett, you logically have to accept the principle of affirmative action. The settlement confirmed that occupancy controls are a form of affirmative action. Abram accepted affirmative action at New York State's other projects in return for the N.A.A.C.P. tacitly accepting occupancy controls. Nonetheless, the plaintiffs did not acknowledge the lawfulness of occupancy controls, and Abram said nothing about the racial "goals" at the other projects.

This was not just mutual hypocrisy. The fact is that even after resolving all the intellectual twists and turns, the Starrett case is still not resolved. By encapsulating so many of our racial dilemmas, the case continues to make one uneasy. And we should be uneasy about the costs of affirmative action, about the burdens of our racial history, and above all about the state of race relations today: they are bitter, ugly, and sad. Learning from our mistakes, recognizing the limits of our preconceptions, even contradicting ourselves, is the only way to rise above the wreckage of recrimination, mutual suspicion, and fear. If Starrett City proves anything, it proves that we can do worse than to start building on a garbage dump.

Church and statesmen in the Democratic Party.

THE SEMINARIAN STRAIN

BY WILLIAM LEE MILLER

A CURIOUS FEATURE of the campaign for the Democratic Presidential nomination seems to have gone unremarked. The candidates for the nomination had been reduced at the end to one Baptist preacher, one son of a Methodist minister, and one graduate of the Yale Divinity School. The immediate predecessor of this year's Democratic nominee was a born-again Baptist deacon who taught an adult Bible class and quoted Reinhold Niebuhr. His predecessor was the son of a Methodist minister who himself went to Garrett Seminary, in Evanston, Illinois, and while a student served as pastor in Methodist churches in the area. And *his* predecessor was Pinky Humphrey, who in his boyhood would sit in the back pews of the Methodist church in Doland, South Dakota, with the son of the minister of that church, and make paper airplanes out of the church bulletins. This last mentioned minister's son, Julian Hartt, became a theologian of distinction at Yale while his boyhood friend was becoming mayor of Minneapolis and Senator from Minnesota. In the fall of 1958 he was the academic adviser for a new student at the Divinity School, a Nazarene from Kansas and Bethany Nazarene College in Oklahoma, named Gary Hartpence.

A political scientist sloping into his fifties wrote to me recently—in astonishment and mock dismay—that he hadn't known back when we were graduate students that you would need to study theology in order to follow American politics. (Thomas Jefferson and James Madison surely did not contemplate that, two hundred years after they got the country straightened out on this subject, the United States Senate would spend two weeks debating the exact nature of prayer.)

To be sure, all of the political fallout from religion—right and left—goes against the pervasive cultural contention, often put forward using the pejorative verb "to meddle," that churches and seminaries, ministers and theologians, should leave politics alone. But that is a contention most people dismiss when religious figures take a position on a serious political issue with which they agree emphatically. Civil rights advocates seldom objected to the activity of Martin Luther King Jr.; nor are anti-abortionists scandalized by the pronouncements of Jerry Falwell.

It would be too much, right now, to examine the whole picture, especially the "conservative ecumenism" that has swung into place behind Ronald Reagan—the Moonies, the Mormons, and the Moral Majority, as one of its adherents described it. From the papers today, and especially

William Lee Miller, a professor at the University of Virginia, is at work on a book called *Religion and the American Republic*.

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from TV, you might conclude that the political impact of American Protestantism—among whites, anyway—had been entirely in a conservative and right-wing direction. But historically that isn't the way it has been at all. In fact, at some periods it must have seemed, from the most visible manifestations, to be almost the reverse—in the 1830s, for example, when humanitarian and reform movements tumbled out of the churches and the revivals all across the country. Think of Harriet Beecher Stowe, the daughter of a leading churchman, the sister of a leading preacher, the wife of a seminary professor, producing in that clerical atmosphere under the influence of an abolitionist evangelist this country's single most potent attack on a social injustice—*Uncle Tom's Cabin*. You could write a history of the Protestant-derived "social reform," woven into the fabric of this nation all the way back to the egalitarians in left-wing English Puritanism ("For the poorest he hath a life to live as the richest he") and coming down all the way to the present. You could argue that both of the major American movements on the "left," before the New Deal—populism in the late-nineteenth century, progressivism in the early twentieth—were given their shape and much of their impetus by the Protestant churches. In the election of 1912 there were the two "progressive" candidates—Woodrow Wilson, the Presbyterian minister's son; and Theodore Roosevelt, the writer of articles for social gospel magazines—both of whom were a good deal closer to the social outlook of the churches than their conservative Republican opponent, William Howard Taft.

But it would be as misleading to present American Protestant politics as consistently "left" as it is to perceive it now as consistently conservative. It isn't consistent. It is enormously variegated; and the category of "left," derived from the more systematic politics of Europe, does not fit its ad hoc character.

PROTESTANT political undertakings found their modern form—voluntary associations, "crusades," movements, sporadic forays into the public realm in behalf of particular "moral" issues—in the early-nineteenth century. The overt results, important and trivial, good and bad, dot the landscape of American culture and history. To mention just a few items, in a random, uneven way, appropriate to this heritage: the abolition movement, the prohibition experiment, Oneida silverware, the Seneca Falls declaration, the oratory of William Jennings Bryan, the Graham cracker, the great philanthropic foundations, the excessive rectitude of John Foster Dulles, the civil rights movements of 1955-68, the utopian colonies, the social gospel movement of 1880-1917, Kellogg's cereals, the pacifist movement between the wars, the attack on demon rum, the 1830s campaign against Sunday mail delivery. (They certainly won *that* one.) But the phenomenon I want to point to goes beneath these overt public activities to the cultural soil from which these hundreds of religio-political flowers bloom, along with many weeds.

In the packing down of that cultural substratum, Protestant Christianity, obviously, played a much larger role than Catholic Christianity, or Judaism, or even the Deism of the Founders—but not only for the obvious reasons. Sheer numbers and the surface of history, of course, have a lot to do with it: the Puritan beginnings, the overwhelmingly Protestant population of the nation at the founding, the larger numbers of Protestants even today. But in addition, there is the inner nature of a major part of American Protestantism—"voluntary" in every sense, individualistic, activist, perfectionist—as it helped to shape, and was at the time shaped by, the new nation.

Dramatizing a little, one might say that though Madison and Jefferson erected one "wall" (between church and state), they inadvertently helped to knock down another one—the institutional and intellectual barrier of definition between the religious and the national ethos. The one ethos and the other combined in the enthusiasms of the common man. America in its formative days developed out of these enthusiasms a kind of semi-nationalist religion and semi-religious nationalism. (See "America's Holy War," by Charles Krauthammer, TNR, April 19.)

BY ENACTING the First Amendment and ending established churches in the states, the early American leaders deregulated the religion market. The resulting "free" market, as is usually the case in the real world with free markets, was not neutral among the competitors; it favored those in a position to take advantage of its particular conditions. These well-positioned entrepreneurs were the evangelicals, the revivalists, the pietists. They were well positioned because the "voluntary way" to which the nation was now committed was their métier; because the method of the emotion-loaded revival—their marketing tool, as it were—fit the situation, especially the opening of the vast territory to the west; because their creedal requirements were usually not exacting. ("Is your heart as my heart?" asked John Wesley. "Then give me your hand.")

The somewhat aristocratic Deism of Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin was not going to send circuit riders out West to hold enthusiastic jumping-up-and-down camp meetings to convert people by the thousands, and neither were the staid old orthodox churches with their formal creeds and rituals and their educated ministry. Revivalistic evangelical Protestantism did do those things, and did them at a time when the West was being settled and the nation was taking form.

One can indicate the result in denominational terms, although the significance cuts across denominations. The Baptists and Methodists, the People Express of this religion market, rose past the denominational equivalents of United and American and TWA to become, by the time of the Civil War, the largest American Protestant denominations. The popular and individualistic kind of Protestantism they represented spread across the country, soaked through the new nation's culture—and got soaked through in return. The major themes—such as the very large space accorded the "voluntary" choice of the individual—were, after all, wholly compatible. This created an amalgam between a form of Protestantism and a

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form of Americanism that has not quite vanished even yet.

Each of the "three faiths" that used to be listed together in parallel fashion in the 1950s is really quite a different entity from the others. Numbers, the timing of arrival, and prejudice meant that this mutual penetration could not happen so thoroughly with Roman Catholicism or Judaism. (Harry Golden remarked about the candidate the Republican Party nominated in 1964 that he always suspected that when a Jew was elected President he would turn out to be an Episcopalian.) In addition, Roman Catholicism and Judaism have a two- and three-thousand-year worldwide history. They have an authoritative and communal, rather than an individualistic, understanding of religion. They have claims of doctrine or of ancient peoplehood.

And there are similar reasons why an amalgamation with an American ethos could not happen so thoroughly among orthodox or high church Protestants—among German or Scandinavian Lutherans, the Dutch Reformed, the Anglicans, and similar groups with a sense of a continuous non-American history. But for some rather typical American Protestant groups—the Disciples of Christ, for example, an invention of the nineteenth-century frontier, and much of "left-wing" or "free church" Protestantism—one's beliefs would be reduced to two clusters: the New Testament and nineteenth-century America. Everything in between could be dropped overboard, psychologically, as something of a mistake, and "Christian" and "American" symbols could almost be folded together in one package.

Furthermore this religious belief was not burdened with much institutional baggage. A young American who headed off to a seminary from Kansas or Minnesota, North Carolina or South Dakota, was not the second son in a settled family tradition being trained in a settled creed for a settled "living" in a settled, established church. Like everything in America, and certainly everything in American Protestantism, what he did and what he believed would reflect to a large degree his own individual choice. Walter Mondale's family background has provided a rather neat example. According to a Mondale biographer, when a Norwegian Lutheran pastor, in the immigrant enclave in Minnesota, asked those who deviated from Reformation orthodoxy on the agitated issue of predestination versus free will to identify themselves, Walter Mondale's grandfather walked out of the church. His father then took the next step, doctrinally speaking, and became a Methodist. (The heavy themes of Reformation Protestantism on the continent—the utter dependence of man upon God—had less appeal in the open air of the American frontier than did those of Methodism, with its much larger place for human will and effort.) Later, in early middle age, the senior Mondale—a farmer—had another dramatic moment of choosing: he went into the ministry, and served in Methodist churches in those very small towns in Minnesota in which his son Fritz spent his boyhood. The father, Theodore, pursued the American Protestant story (progressive branch) another step: he became deeply interested in politics, and specifically in the Democratic Farmer Labor Party. One of those he supported and believed in was the young mayor of Minneapolis, Julian Hartt's friend, Pinky. Theodore Mondale's son had a clear line of inheritance.

George McGovern's story has a similar progression, although in his case the step—the very familiar American step—from a conservative Protestant home to a progressive political commitment took place within his own life. He moved from a somewhat more conservative Methodist minister's home to the 100-proof social gospel Americanism he learned at Garrett Seminary and has professed throughout his career. After his early-morning acceptance speech for the Democratic nomination in Miami in 1972 ("Come home, America"), a knowledgeable listener remarked, "It's pure Methodist Federation for Social Action."

The interpenetration of an American ethos and a Protestant ethos—winding its way on down to the present through many vicissitudes, expressing itself in many shades of religious and political conviction—has no doubt had many unfortunate repercussions. Nativism, along with other forms of bigotry, is certainly one. Some charge that this heritage is a primary cause of American anti-intellectualism. It has something to do with the exaggerated "moralism" that a hundred commentators (George Kennan most notably) discover in American foreign policy—the over-simple emphasis on voluntariness and choosing, without enough sense of limits. There is manifest destiny, and too many "crusades," and the undesirable features of the "moral" reforms. Nevertheless, with all its faults, this tradition has seemed to help to keep alive, however sentimentally and inadequately, something in American public life that is not so undesirable: the Great Issues, the tie between legitimate moral claims and American public order, the understanding of American politics that lifts it above whatever-you-want hedonism and the cold social physics of contending interest groups.

DURING THE COURSE of this year's Democratic campaign I found myself thinking, with a touch of surprise, that the mainstream Protestant seminaries were still performing something like that service (nurturing a certain civic virtue) even in the end-of-ideology period of the 1950s. When Gary Hart went to the Yale Divinity School in 1958, the surrounding intellectual climate had a very strong reductionist or positivist coloration. In departments of philosophy and political science—to use these academic redoubts as measures of a larger cultural inclination—you wouldn't find much constructive political thinking. There was then no visible equivalent to the later formal work suggested by the names of John Rawls, Michael Walzer, and many others; nor of what would later be called "applied" ethics, coping with big fields and problems; nor of the ideological fireworks of the late '60s. It seemed to be assumed—sometimes it was even said—that the large political-moral-philosophical issues, the Great Issues of yesteryear, had been solved; or, if not solved, then not worth talking about. Matters of "opinion" mere-

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ly. "Value judgments." Can't do anything about them. Set them aside. The *real* issues were hard, factual, empirical. The discipline of economics, its philosophical prepossessions not yet much challenged, had then the very highest prestige.

Now, in this desert (desert, from my point of view), there was, it seems in retrospect, inadvertently, and unbeknownst to itself, a rather modest oasis: the Divinity School. (I use the academy, and think specifically of Yale, as symbols for something larger.) To be sure, the atmosphere there was not unaffected by the larger climate of opinion. The complacency of American youth in that quiet time made a curious compound with Neo-Reformation theological currents (Let God Be God!) from Europe, to produce a kind of theological positivism—a reductionism upward, as it were—that reversed in its mirror the positivism of the surrounding environment. Nevertheless, you can only go so far with that kind of thing in a mainstream American Protestant seminary, with kids from places like Ottawa, Kansas. While students in the philosophy department were refining the analysis of their terms and students in political science and economics were carefully separating "fact" from "value" in order to concentrate on the former, Gary Hart in the Divinity School was studying "Christianity and Contemporary Culture" with Julian Hartt. And the activist, morally purposive, world-transforming impulse, tied to the shape of American public life, was still there, waiting to break out. It did break out—with the sit-ins of 1960, and the freedom rides of 1961, and on throughout the decade, in extracurricular activity if not in intellectual work.

GARY HART went on to pursue a political vocation by attending Yale Law School. The Law School, it seemed to me, furnished another example of the Zeitgeist against which the Divinity School stood willy-nilly in somewhat of a contrast. (I was around each of these schools at the time Hart was there; for a reminiscence or two, see "Remembering Gary," TNR, April 16). The smartness of the law students tended to be of a particular kind: nimble, concrete, quick on the draw with a distinction or an analysis. There was much less of the speculative intellect, of conceptual or old-fashioned philosophy, and less imagination; there did not seem to me to be much mulling over of anything. When I read that training in the law sharpens the mind by narrowing it, I knew what that meant. The young lawyers were like superior versions of the young journalists I had known: sharp, in a hurry, good memory, specific—but if it's speculative or fuzzily philosophical, mine eyes glaze over.

What bearing does all this religious history have on the current Democratic fracas? Public figures, even if not in any degree thinkers themselves, can embody and promote a general philosophical outlook. They carry it forward, stamp it into the political culture. Franklin D. Roosevelt did that, gathering up some decades of "progressive" thought and imprinting it upon the nation's soul through the New Deal. Ronald Reagan, alas, may already have done that with the new mixture of conservatisms, recrudescent and neo, of Friedman and Kristol and the editorial board of *The Wall Street Journal*, that began when William F. Buckley came out of Yale in the early 1950s and founded the *National Review*.

Looking back to 1972, the Garrett Seminary graduate George McGovern, whatever you make of him otherwise, did "stand for something." He did it again this year when he came on the stage for a third act, this time to applause at curtain time ("Don't throw away your conscience"). The nominee in 1976 and 1980 had his adult Bible classes and his quotations from Niebuhr; he also had severe limitations in the overview department. Jimmy Carter's personal moral convictions, strongly held and religiously based, affected his positions on specific issues of public policy in a hit-or-miss sort of way. But when it came to articulating a vision or a social philosophy, he abruptly turned into an engineer.

Today there's Jesse Jackson, who—so far—alone among these progressive Protestant Democrats really disputes the definition of the nation's essence with Ronald Reagan. He alone has the pulpit eloquence and moral fire of their common inheritance—maybe too much of it. If there were a chance that he would be President, one would wish that, without losing the fire, he had cooled it a little by some courses in law and economics.

And then there is, or was, Gary Hart. In 1979 Hart returned to the Divinity School to speak at the opening convocation, giving his talk the audacious title, "Toward Replacing Economics." He did not quite manage to get economics replaced in that speech. He indicated that he wanted to speak about the subject not as an economist, but as a graduate of the Yale Divinity School, and he came out against materialism. Perhaps he bit off too much to chew, and spat out platitudes. But it is interesting that he tried. Maybe in the longer term—whatever becomes of him—he'll manage a worthy combination of what is symbolized by his two Yale degrees. In the meantime, though, his campaign evoked this response: I have always suspected that when a theological student is elected President, he will turn out to be a lawyer.

AND FINALLY, speaking of lawyers, there is Walter Mondale, for whom presumably we Democrats will vote. Even if he should lose next fall, it matters how the nominee carries out his task—how he adds his chapter to the continuing definition of the Democratic Party. Somehow since F.D.R. there has gradually come about (with help from adroit advocates) a reversal of the popular perception of the moral meaning of the two parties, the two ideologies: blunt self-interest and unabashed self-indulgence are now associated by many common folk with Democrats and liberals, while Republicans usurp the worthier national ideals. Ronald Reagan, cornball though he is, is an expert at capturing the flag of an idealism that neither he nor his party deserves. Don't let him do it, Fritz. Help the country perceive the choices again the way they were seen by the young Hubert Humphrey, and by the Reverend Theodore Mondale. □

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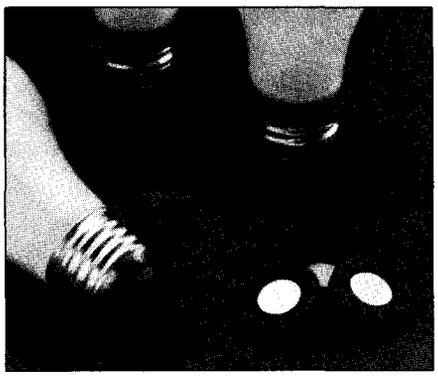

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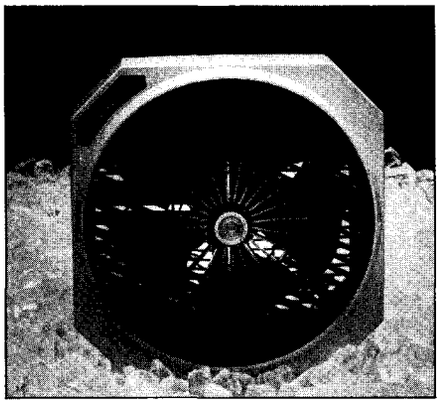

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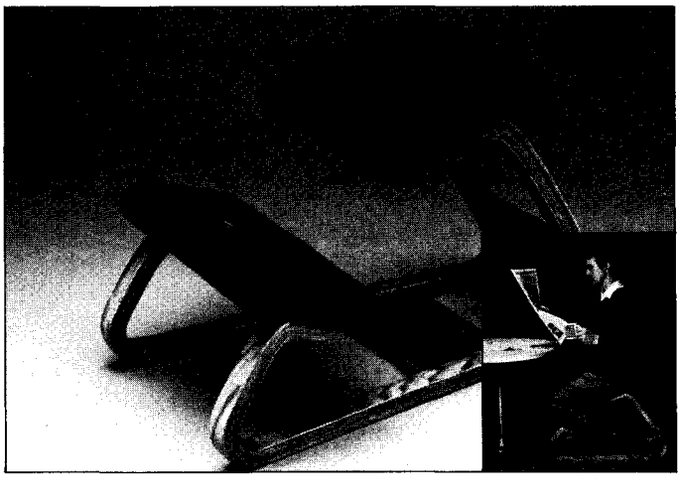

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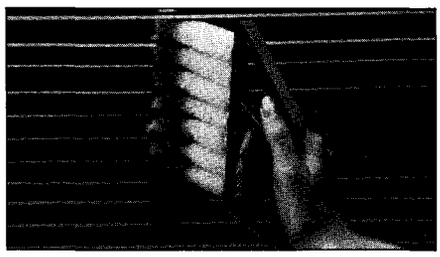

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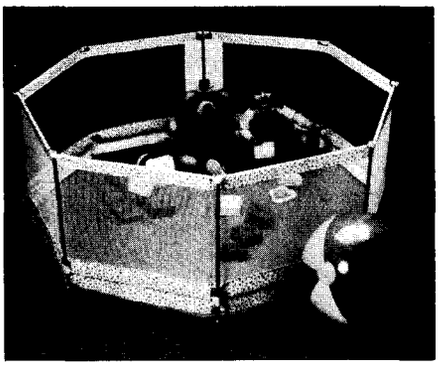

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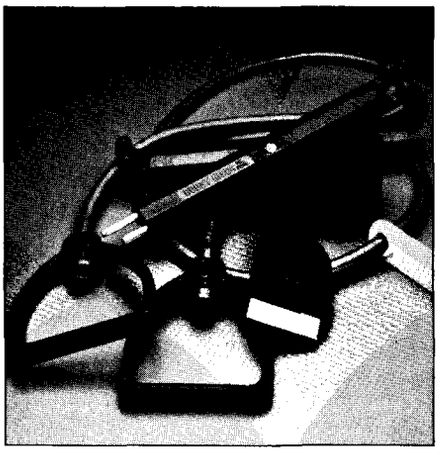

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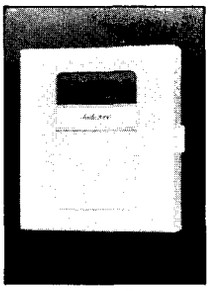

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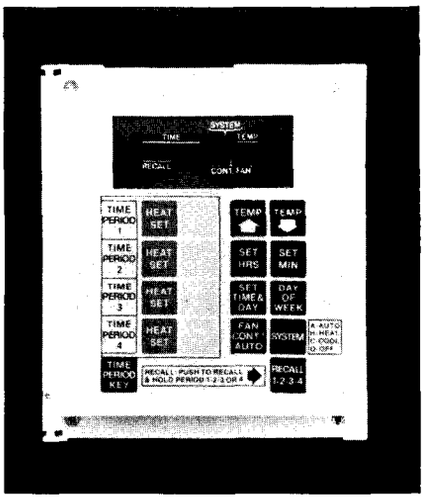

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Old School Ties

Another Country is exceptionally well made in every aspect but its screenplay, and even there, the dialogue is pungent. But after ninety freighted minutes, we arrive only at an unsatisfying implication. Julian Mitchell wrote the screenplay from his London theater success, which I've read, and the very dexterity of his adaptation puts

Another Country
(Orion Classics)

a strain on the theme, a strain that in several ways the original play avoided.

Mitchell's theme is the Burgess-Maclean-Philby phenomenon: the upperclass Englishmen, schoolboys in the early 1930s, who became agents for the U.S.S.R. and some of whom fled there. Near the start we see the aged protagonist, Bennett (based on Burgess), in Moscow, 1983, being interviewed by an American journalist. The body of the film is more or less what Bennett recounts for her tape recorder. At the finish she asks him what he misses in his exile. He says there's only one thing, really: cricket.

Almost all the action takes place fifty years earlier at an old, exclusive public school. (Some of the exterior shooting was done at Oxford.) The school life is heavy with ancient codes and with homosexuality, that English public school homosexuality which is—or is said to be—only a temporary outlet for most of the boys rather than the true nature of their sexual dispositions. In fact, near the end, when Bennett tells a school chum that he doesn't think he will ever love a woman, the chum, who is familiar with the homosexual activity in the school, can hardly believe him.

This chum reads Marx and Lenin assiduously and considers himself a Communist. Never at any point does Bennett reveal the slightest influence on him of the chum's Marxist readings or arguments. Bennett is concerned chiefly with two matters: his idyllic love affair with another boy and his prospective elevation to an elite group in the school. Because of complications about the former, he learns that he will not get the latter. He is disconsolate. At the close he feels wretched, ruined. Because he won't get into that school elite, he believes that he won't have the upward diplomatic career he had fancied for himself. There is hardly a political syllable in what he says, just despair. Nonetheless we flash forward to the conclusion of his Moscow interview in 1983, which concludes the film.

Thus we are to believe that Bennett eventually became a Soviet agent and resident because his homosexuality blighted his social career at school and because, in his belief, this fact blighted his future in British diplomacy. The school story may, as far as I know, mirror Burgess's school life, but if so, that accuracy is not enough. Apparently most of the actual figures who became Soviet agents were indeed homosexual, and their sexuality played at least as much of a part in all aspects of their lives, I'm sure, as sexuality does for anyone. But to concentrate on that aspect, in an early stage, is to trivialize complex matters. One doesn't need to applaud Soviet espionage to infer that those English defectors were sorely troubled by the Depression, by guilt at their own social privileges, by Britain's dogged stolidity in high places; and that they were stirred by the seeming courage and nobility of the Soviet adventure.

The trivialization is less, though present, in the original play because there are no flashes forward to the aged Bennett in Moscow; and Mitchell also obviously relied on the knowledge of history that his British audience brought to the theater. The film quite clearly can't have the same reliance on its audience; more, by juxtaposing the schoolboy with the old man, the film widens the gap between the two, stretches the implication to skimpiness. The viewer has a right to wonder whether treason and defection are as simple as *Another Country* renders them. Ever since Lytton Strachey (at least), theories have been plentiful about the personal causes of public events; but this film is sweepingly reductive about a complicated subject.

However, as a piece of filmmaking, *Another Country* is wonderfully rich. From the very first shot—a glide along a tranquil stream toward a low, multi-arched, stone bridge—the cinematographer, Peter Biziou, evokes the double England, the land that is both treasured and loathed, treasured by those who venerate its beauty and loathed by those who view that veneration as an excuse for social torpor. (The Communist student says he hates cricket because it's such "a damned good game," which by its appeal supports class strata. The English England-loathers feel much the same about English beauties.) Biziou carries this aesthetic-social tension through the film. The director, Marek Kanievska, born in England of Polish parents, makes his feature-film debut here after much TV experience

FILMS WORTH SEEING

After the Rehearsal. A theater-and-film director, Ingmar Bergman, meditates about the theater on film. More a reverie than a drama. Unique and absorbing. (Reviewed 6/25/84)

The Guest. Athol Fugard wrote the screenplay and plays the lead. An episode in the life of the South African naturalist-poet, Eugene Marais, who was tormented by drug addiction. Gripping because of Fugard's performance. (7/2/84)

Marigolds in August. Also written by Fugard, also set in South Africa, also with Fugard. He and two black actors, Winston Ntshona and John Kani, enact a touching topical parable. (7/2/84)

Under the Volcano. Excellent performances by Albert Finney (the Consul) and Jacqueline Bisset (his wife) come close as possible to compensating for the lack of Malcolm Lowry's texture. (6/18/84)

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and shows that he's a potentially important find. In composition, movement, pace, and sympathy, Kanievska never falters. And he has cast the film perfectly—or as close to perfection as casting conditions would permit: apparently, he had to use a few actors who were literally too old for their roles because they were the ones who could do the job. But, since this lofty kind of English schoolboy makes a point of behaving beyond his years, is exceptionally articulate, and has already deliberately developed tastes and mannerisms to make himself a character, the performances of these young men as seventeen-year-olds don't seem quaint.

Bennett is played by Rupert Everett who originated the role in the theater in 1981. Everett carries it off with such subscription to Bennett's attitudes, sulks, yearnings, and juvenile brilliancies that there is no slightest hint of assumed boyishness. Apropos of a fuss about ROTC, Bennett says, "I'm not a soldier, I'm a schoolboy." Everett makes it ring true, despite the evidence of his face. About his face: it is somberly handsome, aquiline, just fierce enough so that it's not overly sensitive. Everett is an actor to watch, in two senses.

In this finely made film, one aspect is particularly fine—the editing. Kanievska and his editor, Gerry Hambling, have sparked *Another Country* with interior vitality by the way they have woven and cut. After that first shot of the English stream, we flash to the beginning of the Moscow interview fifty years later, then back to the school; thus the perimeter of the story is deftly defined. This past-present interplay recurs and is always deft. Admittedly it's simple to do; much more adroit and imaginative is the editing within the school story itself. Kanievska and Hambling know just where to look at every moment, therefore when to look away. They know, just a sliver of a second before we do, where we want our eyes to go—or where we didn't know we want them to go. This eliminates any touch of sag or hurry; more, it suggests intelligence in the film because of the intelligence of its makers. The irony in this is that the excellent editing only heightens our already high expectations, thus adds to our letdown. I wouldn't want to have missed this film; it just left me feeling that Part Two had been omitted.

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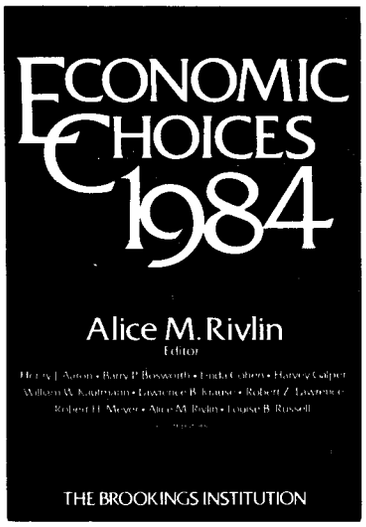

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ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Hard and Soft Machines

I finally got around the other day to seeing *Noises Off*, Michael Frayn's highly acclaimed British farce at the Brooks Atkinson. I hadn't been avoiding it exactly, but I couldn't get tickets earlier and, with so many critics and audiences expressing so much enthusiasm, I was reluctant to come in late with what might be jaundiced comments. I hate to be a habitual dissenter regarding all these celebrated British imports—but I'm afraid *Noises Off* failed to get my pulse racing either. Watching this carefully manufactured laugh machine was like spending three hours staring into the works of a very expensive, very complicated Swiss clock—impressive workmanship, but for how long can one look at revolving wheels, moon disks, and star dials? And who needs a drama critic to tell you about the mysteries of chronometry and horology?

Noises Off
by Michael Frayn

A Nest of Woodgrouse
by Victor Rozov

I seem to remember that Lewis Mumford once declared the clock to be the key machine of the modern age, so maybe *Noises Off* represents the theatrical future—a time when instruments of stage precision will have replaced our more untidy dramatic endeavors. It is certainly more akin to engineering than to playwriting, directing, or acting; even the laughs issuing from the throats of the audience sounded mechanical to me. Ah, you may ask, why can't this sourpuss just sit back and enjoy an innocent little farce without injecting his morbid social generalizations? Well, the truth is I love farces—but ones that involve another dimension than efficiency, and more motor actions than slamming doors and falling down stairs. Farce may be a mechanism, but it is a mechanism rooted in behavior, however exaggerated. When Charlie Chaplin, in *Modern Times*, takes a break from the production line and continues to act like a machine, we laugh because of the contrast with his normal mode of being, just as Feydeau's indiscreet husbands amuse us by their convincingly agonized efforts to avoid exposure by their wives. But the characters in *Noises Off*—nincompoop actors from an incompetent British touring company—display little in the way of credible human reality. They are merely impulses in a laugh track, overstimulated glands in an accelerated metabolism, which may explain why the performers, doubtless better-controlled early in the run (Deborah Rush as a goofy ingenue perpetually losing her contact lens, and Vincent Garber as an inarticulate juvenile who can never finish a sentence, are still controlled) now seem to have run amok—mugging, grimacing, and grandstanding like undisciplined children at a party.

The backstage ambience of the play, where the company continues to rehearse and perform an inane English farce while engaged in fits of temperament, bouts of drunkenness, and tantrums of jealousy, is obviously appealing to audiences—people usually love plays about the theater. It would be unfair to compare Frayn's treatment with that of such superior works about theater as Pirandello's *Tonight We Improvise* (another acerbic director feuding with his actors), Molnar's *The Play's the Thing* (another satire on stage conventions, culminating in a fake curtain), or Mamet's *A Life in the Theater* (another double view of performers from in front and in back of the set)—but I can't resist observing that in those plays relationships are formed and broken because something is at stake. In *Noises Off*, nothing is at stake except the comic payoff—and nothing truthful emerges except the fact that actors, no matter how awful they feel or how badly they behave, somehow still manage to perform. "Getting the sardines on—getting the sardines off," says the play's director, "that's farce—that's theater—that's life." That's certainly what passes for farce, life, and theater in *Noises Off*.

A Nest of Woodgrouse, a Soviet play by Victor Rozov at the New York Public Theater, is not cold or brittle or mechanical; indeed, it may be excessively warmhearted. The third in a series of East European works being introduced by Joseph Papp, it is by far the most conventional: Soviet production techniques may be advanced and innovative but, despite a smattering of satire and farce, this play seems stuck at the level of a plodding social realism (one understands now why Arthur Miller is prized so highly in the Soviet Union). At 71 Mr. Rozov is just critical enough of the regime to invite the attention of foreign audiences, yet conformist enough in style and subject matter to escape the dissident fate of the Czech Havel and the Polish Glowacki. His play, in fact, is still running in the repertory of the Moscow Satire Theater.

The work is a sociological revision of *Tartuffe*. Sudakov, head of "an average Soviet family," is an amiable, thick-headed bureaucrat living in Moscow with his wife Natalya, his son Proz, his daughter Iskra, and his son-in-law Yegor, whom he values above his immediate family. The regime has rewarded his loyalty with a luxurious apartment, good food, and foreign visitors; still, though now in his 60s, he believes he can rise still further in his department. Yegor, who works in the same department, encourages him in this ambition, and when a superior is disgraced by the suicide of his son, a place is open for Sudakov's advancement.

Sudakov, however, must monitor the unruly behavior of his own family to protect his reputation. Proz has fallen in love with a girl of another class whose father is in jail, and Iskra, unhappy over her inability to have children and unfulfilled in her marriage, is discovered praying to some Russian icons that Sudakov keeps in his study as art treasures. The first act climaxes with the revelation that Yegor has been having an affair with Ariadne, a young student of his whose father is highly placed; by the second act, he has managed, with Ariadne's help, to expropriate Sudakov's desired job. The remainder of the action is concerned with the unmasking of the hypocrite. Ariadne comes to Iskra in order to help Yegor "extricate" himself from his marriage, declaring "We're living in a new age—relationships have changed—the family will wither away"—only to learn from Iskra that the reason she is childless is that

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Yegor forced her to have two abortions.

Meanwhile, Proz, angry over his father's insensitivity to justice, has managed to get arrested (he is later released through the intervention of his girlfriend's mother); Iskra repudiates Yegor by boarding up the entrance to her apartment; and Sudakov's wife introduces Yegor to some African visitors as "our neighbor." Sudakov, affirming "We have a good life," breaks into tears, while the Africans begin praying to the tribal masks he has substituted for the icons.

IT'S A PUZZLE why Papp had to reach toward Russia for such a work when there are so many similar ones available in the Gassner anthologies of American plays of the 1930s through the 1950s. Despite occasional felicities in the writing, the plot has been nailed in with brass studs, the characters lack dimension, and the actions seems contrived. In one scene, Yegor and Ariadne slip into the study for a love scene, unaware that Proz, visible to all but the blind, is sleeping right next to them in an armchair. Perhaps Rozov intended a wingchair. And Sudakov's gullibility in the face of Yegor's ruthless behavior is unconvincing in a realistic play, which disallows the obsessional quality Orgon displays toward Tartuffe.

Papp has directed the work with some flair, but perhaps in an effort to authenticate the atmosphere for New York audiences, he has tended to over-Americanize it. Loren Sherman's set—two handsome rooms decorated with Persian rugs, parquet floors, and fabric wallpaper—looks indistinguishable from a co-op apartment on Central Park West, and the performances are redolent of Broadway domestic drama and the movies. Eli Wallach and Anne Jackson, always dependable actors, are vigorous as the Sudakovs despite their Mamma and Pappa *personae*, and Mary Beth Hurt builds a strong if isolated portrait of the depressed and lonely Iskra. But the young people act with all the bouncy exuberance of the teenagers in *WarGames*, while Dennis Boutskiras—investing Yegor with a cold, meticulous, fastidious aura—seems to be miscast as a character who rises purely through charm. Perhaps Papp is trying to tell us that the Soviet middle class is much like our own, and produces the same kind of clumsy, prosaic bourgeois dramas. One way of cementing international amity between two hostile nations is to show that their cultural weaknesses are not so dissimilar after all.

A correction and an apology: In my review of *Sunday in the Park with George*, I made a slighting reference to Alfred Drake as a "professional tenor," who spoke dialogue in the same tremulous way as he sang songs. A reader has pointed out that Mr. Drake is not a tenor but a baritone, and also that he is a very good actor. He is quite right. I was thinking of someone else (whom I won't name since the original remark was facetious), but I do want to express both sincere regrets to the gifted Mr. Drake and profound thanks to the alert reader.

BEYOND THE MELTING PAT

Loyalties
by Daniel Patrick Moynihan

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 96 pp., $9.95)

The old Pat Moynihan occasionally roars in his new book, most notably in this passage at the end of the second chapter:

> At the risk of being called an alarmist, I would again argue that a sustained ideological struggle is under way in the world. The forces of liberalism are under incessant attack—an attack that the West somehow avoids knowing about. The phase during which this assault was directed almost exclusively against Zionism and at Israel as a metaphor for democracy is now about over. A more general case against democracy is being made. A British friend, wise in the ways of the world, put it thus: "They are now on Page 16 of The Plan." What terrors impel the attack? What loyalties will resist it? The answers are needed because the questions will not go away.

This is the Pat Moynihan of the United Nations days, who denounced the Soviet-Arab "Zionism-equals-racism" resolution as an "obscene lie" and confronted the tyranny of the U.N. majority. It is the Moynihan who turned his 1976 Senate primary campaign in New York (against left-liberals Bella Abzug and Ramsey Clark) into a defense of American values. "I want to speak up against the charge that we have exploited other countries or that our own prosperity rests on plunder," he said at a streetcorner rally across from the U.N. "I want to go on declaring that we are prosperous because we have been an energetic and productive people. I want to go on saying that we will not be bullied and that we will not be blackmailed."

And this is the same Pat Moynihan who castigated the Carter Administration in 1977 for diverting the nation's attention "from the central political struggle of our time—that between liberal democracy and totalitarian Communism." When the scales fell from Carter's eyes about Soviet aggressiveness after the invasion of Afghanistan, the old Moynihan declared in a Senate speech in January 1980 that "The Soviets have been pursuing a deliberate geopolitical course of enveloping [Middle Eastern oil supplies] in a giant pincer movement. They are now, or shortly will be, on the borders of Iranian Beluchistan and the pincer is all but completed. The only way we can have any reason to suppose they will not soon move toward the oil fields of the Gulf . . . is to make equally clear that we will stop them. The only way we can make this clear is to deploy the arms capable of doing so."

Whether the old Moynihan was right or wrong—I used to think him wrong, now I think him closer to being right—there was a Churchillian quality to him that ran from his defiant, democratic eloquence and his sweeping vision of world events to his monumental intellectual arrogance (which remains: "You'll find I've never been wrong about anything," he told me in an interview) and his reputation for being "a convivial imbiber of spirit and grape," as Russell Baker called him in 1976. Be-

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cause Moynihan has been such a large figure in politics, and because his political path appears to be taking some surprising turns, I decided to go beyond an ordinary review of his book and interview him and his friends (also some ex-friends) about where he's been and where he's going.

If the old Moynihan was right about America's precarious condition in the world—"it is indispensible to the survival of the West" that America reverse its decline in military power relative to the Soviets, he said in 1980, adding that "this is our moment of maximum peril"—then what America required (and presumably still does) is indeed leadership of Churchillian dimensions. Some who shared Moynihan's views first looked to Senator Henry Jackson to provide that leadership. Indeed, in June 1977, in *Commentary*, Edward Luttwak likened the late 1970s to the late 1930s and Henry Jackson to Winston Churchill. But it was painfully clear, after the two losing campaigns in 1972 and 1976, that this man of strength and character could not get elected President. Before the 1980 election, Norman Podhoretz, the editor of *Commentary*, and other leaders of the neoconservative movement, hoped that Moynihan would be their leader and perhaps even challenge President Carter. Moynihan, it's true, never told anybody he would run for President, but the Jackson wing of the Democratic Party still looked to him to carry their case, and not just theirs, but America's and the West's. Moynihan did serve with Jackson as co-chairman of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, the principal organization of "moderate" Democrats, formed in 1972 to challenge "soft" (or "McGovernite") tendencies in the party. And Jackson Democrats naturally hoped that Moynihan would succeed Henry Jackson as their leader when Jackson suddenly died last September of a heart attack.

ARE LIBERALS SOFT ON COMMUNISM?

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Walter Mondale has said, "I cannot understand it . . . it just baffles me . . . why the Soviets the last few years have behaved as they have."

Gary Hart has said, "*Cuba is not totalitarian.*"

Liberal Congressman **Ted Weiss** has said, ***"There is no way of distinguishing what we are doing in Grenada and what the Soviets are doing in Afghanistan."***

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MOYNIHAN surely has many of the talents required for national political leadership. He has thunderous powers of expression. He is a man of stunning insight and considerable intellectual courage. He understood and appreciated, long before anyone else now in public office, the work of a group of social scientists who were showing that traditional liberal social programs—urban renewal, compensatory education spending, and school busing—were not only failing to work as advertised, but were in some cases hurting the people they were meant to help. This group was labeled—not in a friendly way—"neoconservatives," even though Moynihan insists that "this was a quarrel within liberalism." Some of the scholars involved were punished professionally by establishment academics who did not want to see their ideas challenged, and some duly became conservatives. Moynihan says that he never became one; he did suffer abuse, however, for what he thought and said. In 1965, he wrote his famous report on the breakup of the black family, warning that "the children of our slums are being savagely cheated by a society which thinks it is too sophisticated to care about whether children have fathers and mothers have husbands." The report was initially hailed as a major (and liberal) contribution to thinking about poverty in America, but soon it and Moynihan were attacked as racist. It has taken nearly twenty years for the merits of the report to be fully appreciated—a conference of leading black organizations gathered over the May 5 weekend in Nashville to address problems facing the black family—but even now Moynihan will not discuss the subject on the record.

Moynihan had it right again—and raised another furor—when he wrote a memo urging Nixon that it was time to aid blacks through education, housing, and economic growth and show "benign neglect" toward the issue of institutional racism. In 1969 both liberals and conservatives attacked his farsighted Family Assistance Plan, a policy aimed at reducing welfare dependency by ensuring poor people a guaranteed income.

Moynihan may have stepped on and been wounded by political land mines early in his political career, but he grew shrewd as he matured. After serving as ambassador to India he wrote an article in *Commentary*, called "The United States in Opposition," that got him appointed ambassador to the United Nations by President Ford. At the U.N. he so consistently and eloquently defended Israel and denounced the Soviet Union and the General Assembly majority that he put himself in position to run for the U.S. Senate in New York. And he so skillfully defended the interests of New York, the United States, and Israel during his first term as a Senator, and so ably outmaneuvered potential rivals, that he was reelected in 1982 by more than 2.5 million votes—with 65 percent of the total, the largest majority in a contested midterm election in the history of the U.S. Senate.

AND YET something has happened to the old Moynihan. Those who once looked to him as a potential President are either dispirited, have gone to work for the Reagan Administration, or are looking optimistically for signs of foreign policy strength in Walter Mondale. The Jackson wing of the party still exists, and so does the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, but they are fragmented and their numbers are diminished. And while Moynihan is still considered a member of standing, he is no longer the vessel of hope and inspiration that he used to be.

The Moynihan who once declared that the East-West conflict was "the central political struggle of our time," who voted against the confirmation of Paul Warnke as the Carter Administration's chief strategic arms negotiator, who criticized Carter's SALT II treaty because it produced no reductions in the Soviet missile arsenal, and who accused the United Nations of having been tak-

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en over by enemies of democracy—that Moynihan has been replaced by a new one. The more recent Moynihan denounced the U.S. invasion of Grenada, co-sponsored three competing nuclear freeze and nuclear build-down proposals, opposed deployment of the MX missile, angrily quit as vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence over the mining of Nicaraguan harbors by the C.I.A. and then withdrew his resignation, and regularly lectures the United States about its failure to uphold the ideals of international law.

It should be said that Moynihan can explain and defend each of his actions and positions with his customary intellectual agility. His arguments deserve respect, but they aren't really convincing. For example, he says that Grenada turned our allies against us and undercut our ability to criticize the Soviets over Afghanistan. He argues that Grenada was an assertion of power disingenuously disguised as a rescue mission on behalf of U.S. civilians and neighboring democracies and it violated the Charter of the Organization of American States.

The fact is that our allies are beginning to reassess the invasion. On April 6 *The Times* of London began its editorial (entitled "While Britain Slept") with the words:

> The citizens of Grenada were rescued last October from a grisly fate. . . . Grenada had been hijacked by a particularly nasty little gang of Marxist-Leninists aided by representatives of Cuba, the Soviet Union, Libya, Bulgaria and North Korea.

These were the conclusions, said *The Times*, of a report by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons which also confirmed that the British Governor General on Grenada had requested outside intervention when Prime Minister Maurice Bishop was killed and his government overthrown. The O.A.S. may not have approved the invasion, but the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States—Grenada's nearest neighbors—did. And so, by all indications, did the majority of Grenadans. That cannot be said about the Afghans.

Moynihan says he supports the nuclear freeze because it offers hope to a citizenry concerned about nuclear conflict, but he failed to distinguish between President Reagan's "build first, then freeze" proposal, the Kennedy-Hatfield "freeze now" and the Nunn-Cohen "build-down" resolution. He supported all of them. And although proponents of various freeze ideas insist they should be negotiated on a mutual basis with the Soviet Union, Moynihan favors unilaterally eliminating the MX missile and the B-1 bomber before it's known whether anything can be gained for the systems at the bargaining table.

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

One of the three chapters in *Loyalties* is an essay on the MX, whose deployment Moynihan says comprises "the most profound change in nuclear strategy in our history"—from deterrence to launch-on-warning. His argument is that the stationary, ten-warhead MX will be vulnerable to Soviet attack; in fact, that it will invite attack in a crisis, because the Soviets will fear an American strike against their own land-based missiles. So, instead of planning to ride out a Soviet first strike and follow up with a retaliatory attack, which has been the traditional course of American nuclear strategy, the United States now has to plan to launch when radar warns that Soviet missiles have been launched. We have to use our missiles or lose them, as the saying goes, and the whole process is on a "hair trigger." By the time an incoming attack has been confirmed, Moynihan says, a President will have between eight and twelve minutes to decide whether to fire. Moynihan regards the shift to launch-on-warning as immoral, "lacking . . . a sense of loyalty to life."

Moynihan makes a good case that the vulnerable MX is a missile it would be better not to build, but he does not convince that its deployment would be as cataclysmic and unprincipled as he suggests. America's existing land-based MIRVed missiles, the Minutemen, also are stationary and vulnerable to Soviet attack. As a result, launch-on-warning probably is America's policy already. If it is not, Soviet planners must anyway think it is (which means that they are less likely to try a first strike). If launch-on-warning is an immoral doctrine, furthermore, the blame for instituting it rests not on the United States, but on the Soviet Union, which already has deployed more than 600 SS-18 and SS-19 rockets that are as big as the MX and increasingly represent a first-strike threat

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to American missiles.

What's curious about Moynihan's stances on Grenada and the MX is that in each case he finds reason to concentrate his fire on American policy and to withhold it against America's adversaries. The old Moynihan, one expects, would have denounced attempts to draw parallels between America's intervention in Grenada and the Soviet Union's in Afghanistan. The new Moynihan more or less accepts them. The old Moynihan would have sought ways to entice or impel the Soviets to dismantle their force of vulnerable monster missiles and join the United States in building smaller, less vulnerable mobile missiles. The new Moynihan seems most interested in forcing the United States into a posture of purity, of "loyalty to life." The pattern can be extended to many of Moynihan's new positions. The new Moynihan seems to put primary emphasis on the American government's obeying rules, rather than gaining geopolitical advantages in the struggle of systems that the old Moynihan considered the central concern of the contemporary world.

MOYNIHAN can also explain his behavior on the Senate Intelligence Committee. He claims that he was not briefed in a complete and timely manner on U.S. mining of Nicaraguan harbors in March—which is no doubt true, although he seems not to have asked questions when the Nicaraguan government blamed the C.I.A. for the mines. According to *The New York Times*, a Senate staff member did brief Moynihan April 5 about the mining operation. Moynihan told me he does not remember it. In any event, he resigned his post in protest, resuming it when the committee got an abject apology from C.I.A. Director William Casey. And his interest in international law and organizations—which he pursues in significant portions of Chapters 2 and 3 of this book—can be traced back to Moynihan's doctoral thesis on the Paris Peace Conference following World War I. In his new book, Moynihan quite justifiably criticizes the Reagan Administration for basing U.S. foreign policy on the protection of American "interests," but doing nothing to defend policy in the name of principles accepted by all mankind.

In spite of such explanations and justifications, however, the message that Moynihan conveys to the world has changed in content and in clarity. This has cost him much of the national following he enjoyed. The new Moynihan has become more of a critic and complainer, and less of a leader. He is putting forward no comprehensive geopolitical strategy. He has few recommendations for how to counter either the Soviet Union's military buildup or its political offensive. Even in the area of international law, he has no formula—aside from American good behavior—for bringing his ideals closer to reality.

There are close to a dozen explanations available for changes in Moynihan's stance on foreign policy, Some are political, some psychological. One that is widely believed by political observers is that Moynihan began to worry in 1980 about a liberal challenge in New York State and shifted to the left to avoid it. Others say he hopes to be the 1984 Democratic Vice Presidential candidate and wants to be acceptable to liberals at the San Francisco convention. Moynihan does not accept any of these, but he does say that his role is different now from what it was prior to 1980. "The discontinuity is the election of Ronald Reagan," he told me. "Arguments within the Democratic Party seem wholly transformed by the advent of the Reagan Administration. There is a necessity to organize a coherent opposition to a Republicanism that is unlike any we've ever known."

In a recent speech in New York, Moynihan said that, "I believe that if the present Administration is returned to office we will put in jeopardy many of the most important achievements of the American political system over the past half century. I know that we have too often asserted such danger. It was never quite real in past years. This year it is real." Moynihan has worked with the Reaganites—most notably in helping to fashion the compromise that saved the Social Security system from bankruptcy. He even voted in the Senate Finance Committee and on the Senate floor for President Reagan's original 1981 tax cut of $750 billion—though within two weeks he realized his error and was calling for repeal of a third of it. Since then he has become one of the most eloquent and incisive of all Democratic critics of Reaganomics, and he has a largeness of vision about it that transcends the usual alarms raised by Democrats about the effects of deficit spending on interest rates, the international trade balance, and the economic recovery.

Under Reagan, Moynihan says, "there has commenced the largest transfer of wealth from wages to capital in the history of this nation. . . . Who pays the personal income tax? Overwhelmingly, it is paid by men and women who work for wages and have the tax deducted from their pay checks. And who receives interest payments on government bonds? It is the owners of capital who have rented it to the federal government. . . .

"This administration, if it completes its plan—and its budget is its plan—will require those who work for wages to pay vast sums to those who own capital for generation after generation. . . . The oldest law of political economy is that debtors desire cheap money, and in the end inflation is how the federal government will escape its monstrous debt. Either that, or by confiscating the capital to which the debt is owed. Unless, as in the 1930s, the Democratic Party saves the system from itself."

Moynihan objects most of all to Reagan's domestic policy, but also to his foreign policy. "I think Ronald Reagan is first of all jeopardizing the European alliance," he said. "That's not something to be allowed to slip away. Second, there is an ideological incoherence to this Administration. What's the difference between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China? Some regimes we support are authoritarian, some are totalitarian. Is our ideological position merely anti-Russian, or anti-totalitarian? And third, how does a man who espouses the most severe of anti-Soviet views insist at the same time on feeding the Soviet Army? Jimmy Carter imposed a grain embargo on the Soviets. These people lifted it."

I accept principled partisanship as an explanation for Moynihan's shifts on policy. Still, I think something deeper is at work—a tendency for Moynihan to oppose almost any Administration, whether of his own party or the other. If Moynihan now criticizes Ronald Reagan for abandoning adherence to international law, the doctrine of deterrence, and the pursuit of arms control, one only has to read Chapter 2 of *Loyalties* to recall how withering Moynihan was toward Jimmy Carter's failures to resist the Soviet Union. This essay commences as an analysis and a refutation of the Soviet campaign to brand Zionism as racism. It proceeds to explain why the campaign succeeded at the

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United Nations. But half the chapter is an attack on Carter's U.N. policy, which Moynihan says was based on the idea that America has been on the wrong side of history and must move to the "right" side by, among other things, joining the Soviet bloc in denouncing Israel. Moynihan says that when the United States voted in the Security Council on March 1, 1980, to condemn Israeli settlements on the West Bank (in a resolution that alleged Israeli violations of the post-Nuremberg Fourth Geneva Convention), "American failure was total. And it was squalid." Carter's diplomats, he says, "came to office full of themselves but empty of a steady understanding of the world. The world was a more dangerous place when at last they went away."

THROUGHOUT his career, then, Moynihan seems to have been happiest, at his most eloquent and most incisive, in opposition. He is a brilliant critic. When Henry Jackson died, however, others expected him to be a brilliant leader as well. Now they are disappointed. One of his former Senate aides now working for the Reagan Administration says that "when Scoop died, Pat had to decide whether to lead the Jackson wing or chicken out. He chickened out." This former aide thinks he did so because while Moynihan likes to hand out criticism, he can't take it any more. To lead the Jackson wing, and try to lead the Democratic Party "would mean a lot of fighting and being attacked," this aide says. "He hates that. To an extent you wouldn't believe, he can't abide being attacked by *The New York Times* editorial page. To have filled Scoop's boots would have meant a lifetime of this."

Former aides and boosters know Pat Moynihan better than I do, but I think their views are colored by their regret that he was not the man they wanted him to be and did not do what they wanted him to. The most logical explanation of Moynihan's behavior is Moynihan's own—that he never wanted to be President or Vice President or leader of the Jackson wing of the party, that he is his own man carving his own career. Other people looked to him to be Winston Churchill, but Moynihan again and again refers to the example of Woodrow Wilson. And not the Woodrow Wilson who helped win World War I, but the Wilson who tried—and failed—to fulfill the idealistic vision of a world governed by law. In the last chapter of his new book, Moynihan writes,

> It is useful to keep in mind that no man in the history of the world—certainly no other in our century—so engaged the passions and the hopes of mankind as Wilson did in those decisive months of 1918 and 1919. In huts in Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, his name was spoken with reverence and even his picture was treasured.

Moynihan's final chapter is filled with recollections of how international law and international organizations have failed—from peace treaties that didn't prevent World War I to the League of Nations that didn't prevent World War II right down to the U.N. and the Helsinki agreements that don't control violence and repression today. Through it all, Moynihan observes, the idea of international law, of universal norms to govern the conduct of nations, has survived. Clearly it has not faded for Moynihan, who urged President Reagan to sue Nicaragua in the World Court just as he urged President Carter to sue Iran over the 1979 hostage-taking. Moynihan argues forcefully and convincingly that if democracies abandon the idea of law and justify their actions merely on the basis of "interests," they become just like totalitarian powers which despise the rule of law. He implies that totalitarians will always be better at naked realpolitik than democracies, and observes that upholding law actually is in America's interest.

The problem, of course, is that the world has no mechanism for enforcing its laws; democracies, therefore, have to be able to practice realpolitik as well as uphold principle. They need leaders who can both think clearly and act (if necessary) cruelly. The best democratic leaders—Wilson, Churchill, Roosevelt—have been able to do both. On the basis of his ideas, his energy and his eloquence, some of his friends once thought that Pat Moynihan had it in him to follow in that tradition. I think he did not, and that no one knew it better than Pat Moynihan himself, who prefers the role of outsider and critic. I think the "new Moynihan"—quirky, unstrategic, idealistic—is the old Moynihan deflating the hopes of those who wanted him to be President. He's succeeded. He can still be, however, a great Senator.

MORTON KONDRACKE

OUR MAN FROM HAVANA

Infante's Inferno
by G. Cabrera Infante
translated from the Spanish by Suzanne Jill Levine, with the author

(Harper & Row, 410 pp., $18.95)

Guillermo Cabrera Infante bills himself as the only British subject to write in Spanish, but with this book we can see that he is also adept in the language of his adopted raj. More than a translation, it is a rewriting of *La Habana para un infante difunto*. The Spanish title is an obvious play on Ravel's piece, and Cabrera has managed to preserve his own maternal surname in the English title. The translation into English, by Suzanne Jill Levine abetted by the author, is so well done that the expressive possibilities of the two languages are quickly contrasted; and English seems to come off best as a medium for puns and for what the authorities used to call lewd and lascivious expression.

One is hard put to define this book within the gamut of hallowed genres. The qualities it displays are typical of much of the writing that has come out of Latin America of late. It is autobiographical with real people (such as Carlos Franqui) turning up, and the mise-en-scène is certainly authentic. But the unnamed protagonist and narrator is not Cabrera Infante at all times, just as the Marcel of *Remembrance of Things Past* is not always to be taken as Proust, and Stephen Dedalus is not always taken to be young Joyce, but young Joyce as adult Joyce thought he must have been. In this last sense we will not learn all that much about the young Cabrera Infante; we will learn

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quite a bit, however, about the adult one and also about what he now thinks it was like to grow up in the tumultuous Havana that preceded the Revolution.

Readers who are stuffy enough not to enjoy puns will be turned off rather early in the game. Those who disdain frank sexuality should not even attempt the book. How often it is that the outsider can sense the near absurdities of a language better than the native, who really lets words pass over him and only extracts the practical cogency of the moment: Cabrera shows this to be true as he works with English. It is easy to gather that he is an addicted punster who cannot help himself when faced with a possibility and who brings on the dutiful groan of the less perceptive. In this way he opens up words as much as in any etymological inquiry. Indeed, he comes rather close to what Joyce was laying bare in *Finnegans Wake*. The difference here is that there is less control as Cabrera runs on with his puns, only occasionally giving his expressions the synthesis found in Joyce's wordplay.

Interwoven by means of these puns, however, is a thread of pop culture. It is remarkable how much of North America's crust and how little of its magma have attracted Latin America. As a symptom of our spreading mediocrity (what Jean Shepherd once called "creeping meatballism"), we collect and have great fun with trivia, much of it Hollywood-born. In his novel *Betrayed by Rita Hayworth*, Manuel Puig of Argentina showed the extent of this influence and how it became a part of the culture down there. Disneyland has become the mecca of affluent Latin American tourists and the Brazilians have even made it their capital.

THE THEME of this novel (let us call it that) is coming of age in Havana, the Inferno of the title. An earlier Cuban novelist, José Lezama Lima, called it *Paradiso*, but he drew his title from the Italian of Columbus rather than that of Dante. The sexual emphasis reminds us that the tropics have long been considered a prime mover of sensuality by those in colder climes. Hispanic *machismo* has fed greedily upon this myth. The narrator here dwells more upon the breakthrough into adolescence than the following of any uncontrollable urge. Cabrera Infante leads the narration so relentlessly along these lines that it becomes wearisome at times, saved only in part by the ever-present puns. In keeping with the character's years, however, there is a kind of autovoyeurism here, coupled to the scabrous words that go with it. This is where the book succeeds in holding itself together, where language and leer make a kind of counterpoint, giving adolescence its rhythm. Sex becomes a logorrhea of forbidden words. We see that the Brazilian writer Rubem Fonseca is quite right in observing that the act is not "dirty," but the word that describes it: the physician can say intercourse, the poet can say making love, but it only becomes taboo when we say fuck.

There is another side to the book that might be obscured by the overwhelming presence of so much sexual and linguistic play. It is the effect upon a sensitive adolescent's psyche of the amorphous hell that the Latin American city has become. The same period that brought forth a great flowering of Latin American novels also saw the burgeoning of great metropolitan areas as people flocked from the countryside to the cities, ultimately destroying both areas as places worth living in. The story begins with the move by the narrator's family, quite close in description to Cabrera's own, from small town to city, where they are forced into extremely crowded quarters. The solitude offered a growing boy in the country here must become a solitude of the mind, an invention, an art. It is the adjustment of so many Latin Americans who abandon their villages for life in the city and even in foreign countries. The lack of privacy entailed by such living can exacerbate the solitude that Gabriel García Márquez showed us in his novel.

In that work we witnessed the destruction of a clan, or even a whole people, as the manuscript that is the epic of their existence is read down to its final page. Here too the narrator finishes the novel by reading the entries in a strange log that seems to be prophetic of what will become of him, and he goes into a swoon reminiscent of Molly Bloom, ending with the words "Here's where I came in," alluding to the movies. Even at the end, just before that, he cannot help a play on words between abbess and abyss, which we can only say has deep meanings. People will inevitably compare this book with Cabrera's earlier novel *Three Trapped Tigers*, where he established himself as the punmaster of Spanish-American literature. This novel, however, is more introspective. Although the first book would seem to be a broader picture of Havana during a particularly infernal period, no one comes close to the narrator of this one both as a symptom of the period and as an odd man out.

WITH THE often bloody extremes in its history, Hispanic culture has nonetheless produced a unifying figure who contains the extremes of tragedy and comedy in one person—Don Quixote, the sad clown. There is a great deal of clownishness in this book; and there are those who will trot out the old cliché and call it Marxist, meaning Groucho of course, because of the chaotic verbal virtuosity. Marxist it may well be, but much more in the spirit of Harpo, for the puns are silent, not dialogue, and only in the mind of the narrator, while some of the girls sought after by the hero are blondes, perfect for a Harpo chase. It was the word that brought order out of chaos, however, and here we have the feeling that Cabrera is trying to do just that, to forge, like Joyce, the uncreated conscience of his race, except that his gyre has come

"QUITE POSSIBLY it was only the idea of Jesse Jackson, and not Jackson himself, that was once attractive. Earlier this year he seemed to add a touch of life to the zombiefied Democratic contest. But Jackson has turned out to be a man who can stand before a screaming audience of Mexican students calling for him to 'give it' to the American president. Stand there with equanimity. Stand there, indeed, basking in such 'approval'."

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back to the place in the double feature where he came in.

What is bothersome about this novel is the seeming waste of so much good material. As a collection, or a collector's item, it is chock full of material that might have been given more shape. Too many puns go undeveloped; it should have been possible to have had more of a chain (or a chain reaction) with them. Even though Cabrera suggests that an escape from this inferno is as hopeless as from Dante's hell (either that of the Florentine or that of Stephen Dedalus's great-aunt), the circles might have been better defined so that we could recognize them again as we sit through the display a second time. It could have been based on parody, so effective in the hands of Cervantes or Swift and more recently in Gilbert Sorrentino's *Blue Pastoral*, where the same essential material has led the author to even more outrageous romps with language, but within a sturdier frame.

The narration here has been concerned with the rites (or the rights) of passage, both what the narrator has passed through and, more importantly, what has passed through him, taking shape according to the alembic of his mind, and been passed on to us. If this sounds fecal, it is nonetheless within the bounds of the book, and within the bounds also of Freudian myth. The puns are weaponry, just as was Luther's inkwell or the baby's handful in emulation of the folkloric Chinese sage Hu Flung-dung. This passage into adolescence out of a crowded and disorganized childhood might well mirror what is going on in Latin American writing, caught between community and solitude and attempting to escape the temptation of a second go-around and to spin off into a higher orbit.

GREGORY RABASSA

Gregory Rabassa teaches at Queens College and the Graduate Center, CUNY. His latest translation is *A Certain Lucas* by Julio Cortázar (Knopf).

WORKING-CLASS HEROES

Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850 by Sean Wilentz

(Oxford University Press, 446 pp., $34.95)

The appearance of this book, a fine work by Sean Wilentz, a social historian at Princeton, is reason to reflect on recent scholarship about early American working-class history. Wilentz examines how the ideology of eighteenth-century American artisans was given new meaning by their descendants laboring in capitalist workshops and factories. The publication of *Chants Democratic*, moreover, is not idiosyncratic. Similar works preceded it, and others like it will appear in the next few years.

Many of these works reveal the great impact of E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963). Thompson's work achieved wide influence because of its timing (it was published as post-World War II Stalinism was decomposing) and because of the historical methods its author practiced. Put simply, those men and women who became dependent wage earners were not viewed by Thompson as the passive objects of historical "forces." They instead became active subjects. Their presence helped shape historical process.

More than "economic forces," the revisionist Marxist Thompson insisted, explained the transformation of early industrial England. "The making of the English working class is a fact of political and cultural as much as of economic history." Eighteenth-century traditions and social and economic practices—especially dissenting religions, notions of equality before the law, pre-industrial work habits and craft associations, popular crowd behavior, and the belief in a moral economy as well as in the rights of freeborn Englishmen—contributed to (and were transformed by) the creation of the new English working class. In a sentence that resonated loudly and continues to spark controversy, Thompson explained, "The working class made itself as much as it was made."

THE CRITIC of deterministic historical "models" of all sorts did not argue for an "equation" with two equal parts. Instead he pressed for an enlarged way of understanding historical change and class conflict. Thompson also argued for national distinctiveness. England's working class was "a unique formation." Similar processes occurred elsewhere, but the French and German working classes each developed in different ways. So too with the American working class.

A volume entitled *The Making of the American Working Class* does not yet exist. But a younger generation of historians—in good part inspired by Thompson's methods—has been busy rewriting the early history of the American working class. Their focus has been primarily on particular regions and towns and cities, as well as on pioneer manufacturing industries such as shoes and textiles. And these have been studied mostly to see how new class relations emerged in the American context, how wage earners experienced their changing conditions, and how the early generations of Yankee working men and women adapted older beliefs and institutions and also created new ones to protect capitalist inequality and to protect themselves.

The resulting monographic literature has recast our understanding of the first American working class. In these books and essays, American workers have become the subjects of historical process. The best of these books have won prestigious historical prizes. But few are known—much less read—outside the graduate seminar room. The general reader remains unfamiliar with this ongoing and very important rewriting of early American working-class history. The most important of these recent works (and their publication dates bear notice) include Alan Dawley, *Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn* (1976); Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work, The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860* (1979); Paul Faler, *Mechanics and Manufacturers in the Early Industrial*

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Revolution (1981); Bruce Laurie, *Working People of Philadelphia, 1800-1850* (1980); and Jonathan Prude, *The Coming of Industrial Order: Town and Factory Life in Rural Massachusetts, 1810-1860* (1983). Sean Wilentz's book belongs on this list. It is a very significant addition.

Finely crafted, deeply researched, and often eloquently written, *Chants Democratic* is certainly the best book yet written about the emergence of New York City's working class and a major contribution to American working-class history. Stretching from the 1780s to the early 1850s, it commands attention for many reasons. It reconceives issues about the roles working men played in the "Age of Jackson," issues ferociously debated in the 1940s and 1950s by historians such as Lee Benson, Richard Hofstadter, Edward Pessen, and Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. It is a detailed study of the transformation of the nation's great mercantile port into its premier manufacturing city. It contains vivid portraits of changing street and work life, and of an emerging popular culture. And it thoughtfully and fairly probes middle- and upper-class moral reform movements. But its signal value is its discussion of how and why increasingly disaffected New York working men and their supporters in the late 1820s and the 1830s redefined late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century "artisan Republican" beliefs. A major social and economic crisis associated with the rapid spread of wage labor caused them to transform older beliefs and act upon them. A harsh American critique of early American capitalism emerged. Wilentz is not the first to describe it. But his surely is the best analysis by a historian.

New York City's majority—its male artisans (wealthy and marginal masters along with poor, very poor, journeymen)—occupies center stage in Wilentz's book. The artisans shared goals during the Revolution, participated in the War for Independence, and had a distinctive democratic presence in early American local and national politics. They separated themselves as republican producers and citizens from both the mercantile elite and the laboring poor. They celebrated "a moral order in which all craftsmen would eventually become self-governing, independent, and competent masters." Wilentz does not idealize their condition. Early in the nineteenth century journeymen greatly outnumbered masters and owned little but their tools. Most made shoes or men's clothing, built houses, or set type. They labored in small shops. Masters organized "the Trade," and journeymen and masters labored together, sharing common rules and rituals, an "idiom of mutuality." Their speeches and craft banners indicate that they regarded "the small shop as the very embodiment of republican values."

DRAWING upon J. G. A. Pocock's seminal work on republican ideology, Wilentz details how New York artisans gave special meaning to classical political concepts such as commonwealth, virtue, independence, citizenship, and equality. They were not social egalitarians but they "balanced libertarian ideas of political equality with social duties." They "fused craft pride and resentment of deference and fear of dependence into a Republican celebration of the Trades." Journeymen and masters disputed over "prices" (wages) and work rules, but feared one another less than tyrannical government. Political corruption endangered the common good.

A profound threat to that late eighteenth-century political and social vision and the daily practices associated with it came from outside the political system. The spread of market capitalism between 1790 and 1820, and especially between 1820 and 1850, created unheard of entreprenurial opportunity, but it radically altered New York City workshop relations and diluted craft skills. Labor was increasingly viewed as a mere "commodity," no different from a yard of cloth or a steam engine.

Such changes in New York City occurred quite unevenly and—compared to events in Lowell and Lynn—involved relatively little mechanization. Some trades underwent no serious changes; still, few journeymen escaped the process, because it centered in the rapidly expanding consumer manufacturing industries such as tailoring and

THIS IS WHY

He will never be given to wonder much
if he was the mouth for some cruel force
that said it. But if he were
(this will comfort her) less than one moment
out of millions had he meant it.

So many years and so many turns
they had swerved around the subject.
And he will swear for many more
the kitchen and everything in it vanished—

the oak table, their guests, the refrigerator door
he had been surely propped against—
all changed to rusted ironwork and ash
except in the center in her linen caftan:
she was not touched.

He remembers the silence before he spoke
and her nodding a little,
as if in the meat of this gray waste
here was the signal

for him to speak what they had long agreed,
what somewhere they had prepared together.
And this one moment in the desert of ash
stretches into forever.

They were having a dinner party.
She had been lonely.
A friend asked her almost joking
if she had ever felt really crazy

and when she started to unwind her answer
in long lovely sentences like scarves within her
he saw that this was the way
they could no longer talk together.

And that is when he said it,
in front of the guests,
because he couldn't bear to hear her.
And this is why the guests have left
and she screams as he comes near her.

MICHAEL RYAN

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shoemaking. Skilled tasks, once performed by artisans, were increasingly divided and subdivided so that tens of thousands of men and women (one-third of all New York City manufacturing workers in 1850 were females) became underpaid wage workers laboring in large "machineless factories," garret shops, and outwork homes. These changes transformed the "republican workshop" into what Wilentz calls "the bastard workshop." Piece rates and irregular market pressures in a labor-intensive metropolitan economy conflicted with established artisan republican beliefs. "An ideological crisis," Wilentz argues, "the crisis of artisan republicanism—accompanied the fracturing of labor." Older American ideas—journeymen believed—fit badly into this new American context.

THESE TENSIONS define the historical process dealt with in the finest chapters in *Chants Democratic*, those that consider the well-known labor protests which swept New York City between 1829 and the onset of the 1837 depression. Significant numbers of New Yorkers—most but not all of them wage earners—came to believe that "rich entrepreneurs were destroying the Republic." "The Trades" were becoming modern businesses that fostered a new dependence which, in turn, threatened democratic political institutions. These articulate radical critics included the printer Langdon Byllesby (influenced by English Ricardian and Owenite socialism), the machinist and inventor Thomas Skidmore (the harshest American-born critic of unequal property ownership), the British Jacobin free thinkers Frances Wright and Robert Dale Owen, and the Brooklyn journeyman cabinetmaker, trade unionist, and cooperativist John Commerford. These and lesser known critics fill many pages, as do authentic popular social movements that brought mostly poor journeymen into the polling booths, into the streets to demonstrate, and into new journeymen-dominated trade unions that sustained strikes and supported cooperatives.

No historian has written more thoughtfully about these New York movements than Wilentz. He does not idealize them and he does not impose the alien values of another time upon them. He delineates differences among them. But his greatest success—and his most original contribution—is the context he puts them in. That returns us to E. P. Thompson. Wilentz splendidly demonstrates how new patterns of workshop exploitation transformed most journeymen into dependent wage earners. They, in turn, transformed the older artisanal republican ethos. Older ideas were reshaped to attack new class inequalities and to legitimize new protective institutions such as trade unions and cooperatives. "Above all," Wilentz writes of these journeymen, "the notion of independence, central to both republican politics and the order of the artisanal system, propelled their critique of proletarianization. Rather than scoff at the legitimacy of the artisan republic they celebrated it—but in new ways."

New York journeymen asserted economic rights. These rested on a mixture of the labor theory of value and redefined republican beliefs. Journeymen shoemakers, for example, insisted that employers could not fix their wages; that was a "usurpation of authority." Journeymen sailmakers called their skill as laborers "our property" and claimed "an inherent right" to dispose of it as they saw fit. In craft after craft, Wilentz writes, "the republican mutuality of 'the Trade' " became "the republican mutuality of the union." Republican language served a new constituency in new ways in New York City in the mid-1830s. Neither Andrew Jackson nor John Quincy Adams (much less the New York merchants and employer-masters) shared beliefs with these early critics of market capitalism and wage labor.

Wage earner self-organization, moreover, promised, according to its advocates, to protect the endangered Republic itself. Economic dependence weakened virtue and corrupted citizenship. Workshop exploitation made for such a new dependence. A banner at a 1834 General Trades' Union parade deplored the widening "line of *distinction* between the employer and the employed." That was "hostile to the best interests of the community at large, as well as the spirit and genius of our government." Corruption and dependence no longer were simply the doings of unvirtuous, powerful men, but also had their origins in prevailing property relations.

Wilentz should not be misunderstood. He is not suggesting that only workers appropriated and reshaped the republican "legacy." (So, incidentally, did slave owners and slaves and ex-slaves like David Walker.) But the successful masters and new employers read a very different meaning into the shared legacy. "Entreprenurial republicanism" came to mean open competition in the race for wealth, upward social mobility, upper-class moral benevolence, a celebration of the free market, and hostility to trade unions and cooperatives. The bifurcation of artisan republicanism left as its legacy "two very different sets of ideas about independence, virtue, commonwealth, and equality." After 1840, nineteenth-century American workers (mostly immigrants and their children) debated the meaning of these competing if unequal traditions. Andrew Carnegie and Samuel Gompers defined virtue and independence in different ways in the 1880s. So do Ronald Reagan and Coretta Scott King in the 1980s.

To be sure, so ambitious a work as this is not without its shortcomings.

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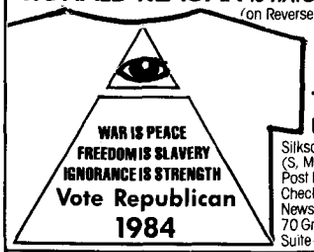

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Artisan antislavery support (especially in the 1830s) is treated too briefly. The New York City land-reform movement in the 1840s remains obscure. And shifting class relations following the 1837 depression are dealt with too episodically. Wilentz writes very perceptively about the Irish urban populist Mike Walsh (the spokesman for the "Shirtless Democracy"), the plebian Washingtonian temperance movement, and the start of popular nativism. But the New York working class of the 1840s remains distant in his pages. And Wilentz's description of scattered labor troubles in 1850 as a major "labor crisis," and as the culmination of decades of "class formation" is quite mistaken. Those critical decades did not end until the citywide eight-hour strikes in 1872, or even as late as 1886, when Henry George lost the New York mayoralty election.

MOREOVER, immigrant presence in the New York City working class is inadequately explored. Starting in the mid-1840s, the city became one with an overwhelmingly foreign-born working class. German and especially Irish immigrants predominated then. By 1855, for example, recent immigrants dominated the all-important and worst-exploited consumer finishing goods industries: shoemaking (96.2 percent) and tailoring (96 percent). Wilentz locates their presence—so early in *their* American experiences—in the militant trade unions of the early 1850s. No fewer than 60 percent of the delegates to the 1850 New York Industrial Congress were of foreign birth, mostly Irish. Theirs, too, was a "republican" critique. How and why that happened so soon after their arrival is not explained. And until such questions are addressed, fixing the "end" of a historical period remains largely an academic exercise.

Most surprisingly, *Chants Democratic* lacks a comparative American dimension. Wilentz's brief contrasts between New York City and London and Paris are illuminating. But we learn nothing about how the practices and beliefs of New York wage earners—especially their redefinition of artisan republican ideology—compared to those in Lynn, Lowell, Philadelphia, and other American towns and cities. Journeymen unions, short-lived workingmen's parties, and harsh criticisms of wage-labor dependency emerged there, too. A contrast between them and the Great Metropolis is incomprehensibly missing here and therefore limits our understanding of "The Making of the American Working Class."

Chants Democratic nevertheless significantly moves us in that direction. No one has written more searchingly about how the rapid intrusion of market capitalism split artisan republican ideology and led working men and women to redefine their political and economic status by remaking older American beliefs. Nineteenth-century European and American workers experienced proletarianization in different historical settings. But "like their counterparts in Britain and France," Wilentz correctly concludes, American workers—New Yorkers in this concrete instance—"transformed a political language into a new understanding of class divisions and wage earners' rights." Wilentz has told part of that story—so central to nineteenth- and twentieth-century American history—and told it very well.

HERBERT G. GUTMAN

Herbert G. Gutman, Distinguished Professor of History at the Graduate Center, CUNY, is the author of *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (Pantheon).

SAVING THE NOVEL

Motives for Fiction
by Robert Alter

(Harvard University Press, 248 pp., $20)

Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative
by Peter Brooks

(Knopf, 363 pp., $17.95)

It is good to hear that novels are still read for pleasure and for meaning. Structuralist and poststructuralist dronings on the subject of textuality and intertextuality, semiosis and poesis, tropes and self-referential language games, have so dizzied some, and so dulled the wits of others, that it is most heartening to read two sensible critics who refuse to indulge in sterile exercises of ingenuity. Robert Alter and Peter Brooks believe that novels do matter, that they can tell us something about the way we live and think, about the way we try to make sense of the bafflements of our existence. They come to problems of narrative from different premises and with different approaches; but neither seems to forget that most readers of fiction continue to have a healthy appetite for interpretation, that they want to cry and laugh about what they read, and that after reading certain books their way of looking at the world and at themselves is no longer quite the same.

Why should this be surprising? Or is it that a search for meaning and a belief in the broader responsibilities of literature are signs of hopeless naïveté? To listen to some of the exponents of literary "modernity," novelists—especially since Flaubert—are interested primarily in form; they are experimenters in a game of literary structures. According to this modernist creed, the novelist inherently rebels against the tyranny of storytelling, subverts narrative flow, and aims at indeterminacy. What is praised most often by trendy critics are notions hostile to the prestige of the subject and the mimetic function of art. We have heard a great deal about the intransitive nature of the literary work, the elusiveness of the center of meaning, the need for "deconstruction," the fundamental questioning of the communicative act. The worst is the predictability and monotony with which these leveling concepts are applied to the most diverse texts, successfully refining all their wealth out of existence.

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Peter Brooks in *Reading for the Plot* and Robert Alter in *Motives for Fiction* display a sophisticated awareness of what has happened since the days of New Criticism. They are perfectly at home with the latest theoretical and methodological developments, and capable, each in his own way, of diagnosing the current malaise of literary studies. At a time when so many have surrendered to an anaesthetizing rhetoric, their voices have retained an independent ring. Brooks, tuned to Continental critical discourses, sounds more academic. Alter is more informal, more the essayist in the best sense of the word, largely concerned here with the American cultural scene, but truly cosmopolitan in outlook.

Motives for Fiction is at first glance an unassuming collection of essays which originally appeared in reviews such as *The American Scholar*, *Commentary*, and THE NEW REPUBLIC. But despite the diversity of topics and occasions, there is nothing disparate about this collection. Robert Alter hardly need apologize for what he calls "episodic critical writing." With refreshing modesty and directness, he addresses large and important issues, steadily relating the experience of reading to the reading of experience.

ALTER'S best qualities are in evidence. His aesthetic sensibility enhances a fine sense of the historical context. His flair for detail never interferes with his grasp of broader implications. There is verve, and even a sting, in his prose; but his judgments are fair. Above all, he has a feeling for verbal modulations and colors (he calls them the "painterly" qualities), and is not ashamed to engage in sensuous readings of texts.

Motives for Fiction keeps in steady view the complex relation of literature to "reality," focusing in various modes and registers on what Alter calls the puzzle of mimesis. Contrary to prevailing antimimetic assumptions (we have heard a great deal about mimetic fallacy, about the rift between signifier and signified), Alter believes that the novel can be "an imaginative instrument for the empirical exploration of social, moral, and psychological realities." What is at stake is nothing less than the responsibility of literature, and of those who speak and write about it, to respond to human predicaments and human choices, while maintaining alive the specificity of the literary language.

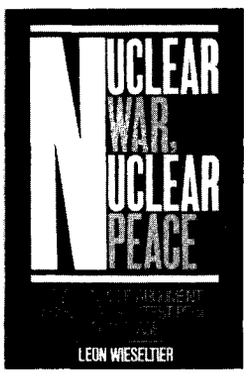
Implicit behind this allegiance to the responsibility of both fiction and criticism is a commitment to the much abused notion of humanism.

This is not to suggest that Alter is unaware that literature is play. Whether he writes about Stendhal or Nabokov, he constantly extols the ludic virtues of the literary craft. But he knows that playfulness can be the essence of seriousness (though never of *l'esprit de sérieux*), that the antirealist method can perhaps best probe the roots of ordinary experience, just as it can speculate on the complex dialectical relationship between art and so-called reality. All literature necessarily reflects and proposes models of communication (sometimes, as in the case of *Tristram Shandy*, in the guise of sexual metaphors); but such play and self-consciousness must not becloud the fact that it also addresses, splendidly at its best, what is aptly called "the inexhaustible enigma of conscious life."

In a telling chapter on John Fowles, Alter comes close to equating representation and knowledge. Mimesis is viewed as a means of recovering (or uncovering?) with sharpened insight our experience as moral agents. The greatest novelists—Dostoevsky, Proust, Mann, Kafka—never lost sight of this dimension of their work. And Flaubert, though he is now most often admired as a father of nonfigurative fiction (did he not want to write a "book about nothing"?) remains, as Alter puts it, committed to the mimetic view of art.

Alter is of course dead right, and this "mimetic" commitment is conveniently forgotten by those who today exploit Flaubert's most paradoxical pronouncements to support their own doctrinaire views. Flaubert's contradictory sallies on the status of the literary subject provide a good test case of the dangers of theory-obsessed readings. It is true that Flaubert proclaimed that there are no beautiful artistic subjects, that all is a question of form, that style by itself is an absolute way of seeing things, that from the sheer point of view of art the subject does not really exist. Such an antirepresentational bias may be sur-

NEW REPUBLIC BOOKS



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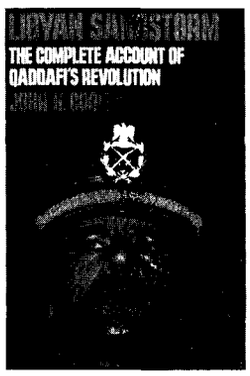

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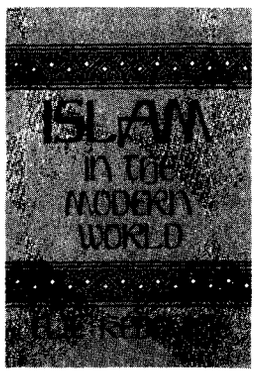

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New Republic Books, a co-publishing venture with Holt, Rinehart and Winston, is devoted to politics, culture, and the arts. Forthcoming titles include "The Forest on Fire" by Simon Leys and "Solik" by K. S. Karol.

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prising on the part of a writer who for so long has been considered the chief proponent of realism. The fact is that despite Flaubert's insistence on the autonomous beauty of the art work, despite his many provocative sallies deflating the importance of the subject, one can easily glean from his correspondence an even more impressive number of statements proclaiming the central significance of the subject. Hence Flaubert's repeated use of the words *reproduction* and *representation*. The work of art, according to Flaubert, must be a magnifying mirror of external reality; the artist is compared to a mime.

The lesson to be derived from Alter's book is that no writer should be held captive by a single theory, not even his own. The case of Flaubert suggests indeed that he is, in an exemplary fashion, caught between two contradictory theoretical temptations: the denial of the subject and the discredit of the expression. On the one hand, the inferiority of experience is posited as the precondition of art: it is the poet's voice, not lived life, that is to provide the occasion for the text. But on the other hand, lived experience is perceived as so richly textured as to become inexpressible in words. Perhaps all literature thrives on this inner contradiction. It could be argued that this is precisely the essential drama of all literary expression: to want to say that which is known to be unsayable, and to express this dilemma in a distinctive language which, even though it overlaps with other languages, is the unique language of literature.

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SIGNIFICANCE through form is precisely the subject of Peter Brooks's *Reading for the Plot*, which turns to a crucial aspect of fiction-making—one that has been neglected by recent critics concerned primarily with questions of point of view, narrative voices, subversions of literary codes, and the much belabored relation of metonymy to metaphor. While having learned a great deal from the formalists and the structuralists, Brooks goes beyond the somewhat static models proposed by grammars of narrative, and eschews the pseudoscientific pretensions of the so-called "narratologists."

Any attempt to link forms of fiction to the psychic processes proposed by psychoanalytic texts incurs certain risks. Brooks's ambition (here he is on common ground with Alter) is to reaffirm the desire and the need for meaning expressed by novels and their readers, and in so doing to analyze the ways in which fiction negotiates with reality. The basic assumption stems from an observation: the enormous prestige of narrative forms in the nineteenth century, paralleling the prestige of historiography, seems to have instilled the belief that truth was essentially narrative.

Brooks brings to his ambitious undertaking extensive and refined critical gifts. He knows all one needs to know about Propp, Bakhtin, Greimas, Barthes, Genette, Todorov—even the "thermodynamic" readings of Michel Serres. He displays a respect for the novels he discusses, which is rare at a time when critics tend to believe that they are the true creators. And he has a nimble, playful mind which in some quarters will surely make him appear to be guilty of theoretical eclecticism. The result is a synthesis of the best in several of the current approaches, without ever a disposition to block the horizon in order to make a point. Brooks is, moreover, a close reader, as when he deals with the opening primal scene of *Great Expectations*, and elegantly discusses the themes of inscription, self-naming, incarceration, and repression.

The range of the book is likely to appeal to many readers. We move from general considerations on time-boundedness, to a Conan Doyle detective story, to an episode of Rousseau's *Confessions*, to narrative duplicities in Stendhal, plotting and deviance in Dickens, energy in Balzac, the impact of the Industrial Revolution on the novel, the dynamics of psychic life according to Freud and more. Most of the chapters stand as excellent independent pieces. Yet they are related by a common strategy. The question raised is how significance can be wrested from the confusion of experience by means of its narrative ordering, and specifically through the construction and deconstruction of plots. The central thesis, harking back to the Aristotelian stress on plot, appears grounded in a personal conviction that the order of narrative can rescue meaning from temporal flux.

TO MAKE his points, Brooks mobilizes an impressive array of critics and critical notions. He enlists, among others, Walter Benjamin and Sartre, both of whom see death as providing the authority and the sanction of narrative. What matters here, however, is not what critic or critics Brooks chooses to align himself with. The drift of Brooks's subtle argument, supported by a wealth of examples, is that all narration is seen as a transaction binding the writer and the reader in a common denial of death.

This positing of anticipatory retrospection as a feature of all narrative is not meant, however, to appear as a reductive law. Brooks is far too interested in dealing with the specificity of given novels, and he is indeed at his urbane best in making sensitive assessments and fine distinctions. For my own part, I find the book most rewarding, not where it attempts to apply Freud, for example, to Balzac. The true conceptual interest of Brooks's book lies in the numerous questions it raises, some of them implicitly. What, for instance, is the relation of narrative dynamics and themes of ambition to socio-economic realities in the age of the steam engine and industrial expansion? Or again, to what extent does the concern for origins and homecomings in so many plots reflect a modern anguish in the face of linear concepts of time?

At every point, *Reading for the Plot* encourages us to reflect on the signifying patterns of narrative. The combined forward and backward glance in novelistic structures implies a spatial conception of the text and its ironic tensions, but it

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could be understood in political terms as well. The nineteenth century in particular, to the extent that it experienced the forward thrust of revolutionary ideologies, was also condemned to experience this ideology in retrospect, since the Revolution, which remained to be completed in the future, was already an event and a model in the past. The link between fiction and the historical context remains everywhere in evidence, even where it implies a rebellion against the tyranny of history. The prevalent motifs of the father search, of parricide, of quests for origins and questionings of authority, can further tell us a great deal about the cultural traumas and preoccupations of the postrevolutionary world with which Brooks is primarily concerned. Above all, plot itself—in its relation to plotting and to power games—can be seen both as a reflection of the political dynamics and a refusal to submit to the dictates of worldly power.

It is revealing and reassuring that both Brooks and Alter repeatedly refer to the novel's commitment to its historical, moral, and psychological significance. The significance in question is of course never a simple, or even clearly decipherable message. Literature sings the radical mystery of experience. Alter, referring to Borges, puts it well: the mind conceives what it cannot possibly comprehend. Brooks speaks of literature's refusal to allow temporality to be meaningless. To be sure, these two critics discuss the commitment of fiction to human concerns in very different terms. But at a time when criticism tends to confine itself to technical analyses or to scholastic assertions of non-meaning, at a time when even the critical vocabulary betrays an obsession with emptiness, effacement, and absence, it is most satisfying to hear such unequivocal reaffirmations of plenitude.

VICTOR BROMBERT

Victor Brombert is the Henry Putnam University Professor of Romance and Comparative Literatures at Princeton University. His new book, *Victor Hugo and the Visionary Novel*, will be published by Harvard University Press in the fall.

GEORGE THE ENLIGHTENED

Cincinnatus: George Washington and the Enlightenment
by Garry Wills

(Doubleday, 272 pp., $18.95)

One of the myths most popular among historians in this century is that George Washington resists understanding. To be sure, historians concede that we know what Washington did throughout much of his life; we know where he was, and what he was up to, on almost any given day during the eight years of the American Revolution. Washington's papers have survived in profusion, and a new edition of his diaries and papers is being published. His contemporaries left commentaries on his character and behavior by the score, and portraits and sculptures of him abound. Yet twentieth-century American historians still don't really believe they understand him.

Garry Wills has read the biographies, as well as a good deal of the historical literature surrounding the events of Washington's life, and he has studied the painting and sculpture with care. Despite all this labor he declares himself as baffled as anyone in the face of the mystery of George Washington. "Washington eludes us," he says, "even in the city named for him. Other leaders are accessible there—Lincoln brooding in square-toed rectitude at his Monument, a Brady image frozen in white, throned yet approachable; Jefferson democratically exposed in John Pope's aristocratic birdcage. Majestic, each; but graspable."

It is not clear to me what Wills expects

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us, the children of the founders of the Republic, to grasp. Surely it is doubtful that historians, or biographers, have probed the psyches of Jefferson and Lincoln more deeply than Washington's. The modern obsession with identity, with the hidden man, and with motives (sometimes to the exclusion of consequences) may account for the conviction that Washington is an enigma.

There are other reasons as well. Washington rarely talked about his feelings, and he did not lay bare his soul in his diary or in his letters. In person, he kept his distance. He was usually grave in bearing, and often remote in company, even aloof. He was also a great man, and perhaps in this unheroic age the great and especially the heroic are hard to understand.

The Washington of interest to Wills is the public Washington, the Washington of power and virtue. The Washington of interest to others, especially those historians who say they cannot understand him—that is, the "inner" Washington (sometimes referred to as the "real" Washington)—does not really figure in Wills's book. We should be grateful that Wills doesn't aim to analyze him, for in this volume Washington stands out as a fascinating political and moral leader.

To make the public Washington comprehensible, Wills turns to three great events of his life in which his subtle understanding of power and his restraint in its use are especially clear. The first was the resignation of his commission as Commander in Chief of the Continental Army; the second was his participation in the Constitutional Convention of 1787; the third, his Farewell Address. Each of these actions, Wills argues, showed Washington's commitment to restraint in the use of power. Each event revealed Washington's self-conscious willingness to place his reputation, indeed his legend, in the service of the American Republic.

Washington resigned his commission as Commander in Chief in December 1783, almost exactly one month after the last contingent of British troops left New York City. There was no requirement that Washington appear before Congress to surrender his commission. He might simply have enclosed his commission with a letter of resignation. He went before Congress, however. He did so because he recognized that his appearance could be made a powerful demonstration of the power of civilian authority in the young republic. It was the symbolism of the occasion that counted, and Wills describes the scene deftly and vividly. Congress played its part well and General Washington performed with magnificent emotion. He had the leading role in the enactment of this political drama, but he managed to suggest that his part was, after all, secondary to that of Congress.

Most notable in Wills's treatment of this event is his discussion of the iconography that grew up around it—and all of the major public acts of Washington's life. Painters and sculptors, Wills shows, deliberately sought to link Washington's actions with the Enlightenment ideal of "the ancient republic that men were yearning for." Thus these artists played to Washington's purposes—to revive the ideals of classical republicanism.

In this context Wills's comments on John Trumbull's *The Resignation of General Washington* are especially shrewd. Wills's analytical style resembles that of conventional art historians. For example, he discusses the iconographic sources of Trumbull's painting, and describes the scene depicted—the location of major figures, the meaning of the background, and the significance of the light in the picture. He tells us that Washington, the central figure in the picture, standing with his left hand on his hip, has assumed the pose of Patriotism. To the left stands Thomas Mifflin, the president of Congress, who represents civil authority. Wills's description of the remaining figures in the picture is satisfying as is his conclusion that the painting sums up the themes associated with Washington's resignation of his commission as Commander in Chief. What raises this account from the ordinary is its setting in a context dense with the details of the political ideals of the Enlightenment. It is, in short, an analysis that integrates intellectual history with art history.

The problem faced by American artists, Wills believes, was to convey in their representations of a noble and heroic Washington the simplicity and equality of American republicanism. Not all of the artists of the young republic, one suspects, would have understood this formulation. Not all would have recognized exactly what was expected of them if they were to assist in

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960 by Ronald H. Spector (Center of Military History, U.S. Army). The accomplished first volume in a history of the Army's tortuous experience in Vietnam. (Reviewed 7/2/84)

Dawn to the West by Donald Keene (Holt, Rinehart, & Winston) 2000 pages exhaustively, informatively, covering the modern literature of Japan. (6/25/84).

An American Procession by Alfred Kazin (Knopf). The brilliant culmination of a critic's lifelong look at American literature. (6/18/84)

War in Val D'Orcia: An Italian War Diary 1943-44 by Iris Origo (David R. Godine). One woman's day-by-day record of life in an Italy torn by war. (6/4/84)

Notes From a Child of Paradise by Alfred Corn (Viking/Penguin). A long poem about love and hope in the 1960s. (6/11/84)

The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion by Leo Steinberg (Pantheon/October Book). An original study of a delicate subject. (6/11/84)

The Making of America's Soviet Policy edited by Joseph S. Nye Jr. (Yale University Press). Clear-eyed analyses of, and prescriptions for, the rocky relations between the superpowers. (6/18/84)

Children in Exile: Poems 1968-1984 by James Fenton (Random House). A British poet's evocations of Germany, Cambodia, and other nightmares. (5/14/84)

Three Novels: The Blackmailer; A Man of Power; The Great Occasion by Isabel Colegate (Viking). Portraits of self-made men, their personal pains and social mistakes. (5/28/84)

Jinnah of Pakistan by Stanley Wolpert (Oxford University Press). A major biography of the subcontinent's lesser known hero. (5/7/84)

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the revival of the ancient republic. Not all succeeded; nor does Wills contend that they did. He does, however, make some rather facile assumptions about the "Enlightenment," and about the yearning of Americans for a classical republic. The smooth surface of agreement that he finds in republican thought seems questionable; a desire for a classical republic surely existed in some American minds, but so also did a conception of the future formed on rather different models. Wills does not discuss the millennial visions that inspired Americans of the Revolutionary generation; nor does he give attention to an emergent democratic culture that thought much more of the future than of the past.

One would like to know more about the reactions of Americans in the new republic to the painting and sculpture that celebrated Washington's greatness. Philip Hone, a New Yorker, said of Horatio Greenough's *Washington*, which was modeled on the Elian Zeus of Pheidas, that "It looks like a great herculean Warrior—like Venus of the bath, a grand Martial Magog. . . . Washington was too prudent, and careful of his health, to expose himself thus in a climate so uncertain as ours. . . ." I should note at once that Wills does not present Greenough's statue as successfully conveying republican ideals. Hone's remark may suggest, however, something of a diversity in the aesthetic and political judgments of Americans. Wills's analysis of the Washington iconography is almost always convincing. It is the larger meaning of the Wills's history that often seems askew: the political environment of the art he discusses and the attitudes of Americans towards their republican polity.

Near the end of his book Wills protests, as he has at the beginning, that "Washington continues to elude us." Wills is, I think, wrong and ought to recognize his own achievement: the important Washington for all of us to know, the Washington who used power with great adroitness for the good of the country he loved, stands out clearly in this interesting book.

ROBERT MIDDLEKAUFF

Robert Middlekauff, director of the Huntington Library, Art Gallery, and Botanical Gardens, is the author of *The Glorious Cause* (Oxford University Press).

TRB, *from page 4*

most pacifist in their desire to avoid war. The picture is one of unalloyed selfishness: unwilling to tax themselves to help others less fortunate; adamant in demanding a right to sex, drugs, and abortion on demand; and unwilling to risk their own necks in defense of freedom. Yuk! Would you want your daughter to marry one of these specimens?

Based on my own acquaintance with yuppies (some of my best friends . . .), this indictment does not ring true. Selfishness and narrow ambition were not unknown in the 1950s. Yuppies are surely more likely to vote for Walter Mondale than their parents. What I find especially unconvincing is the attempt to cast the details of yuppy culture in a Gibbonesque light, as the beginning of the end for America. What, after all, is so terrible about quiche? Are jogging and spinach salad really more decadent than golf and sirloin? Is the journey from an obsession with the perfect martini to an obsession with California Chardonnay really another stage in the decline and fall of American civilization? Many aspects of yuppy culture strike me as clearly superior to what they replaced: small cars versus large ones, backpacks versus briefcases, hanging plants versus curtains, diversity versus conformity. At any rate, these are matters of taste, and nothing a yuppy needs to feel ashamed of.

There is a terminological dispute: Is it "yuppies" or "yumpies"—for "young upwardly-mobile professionals"? I first heard the term "yuppy" several years ago in Chicago's near-north side, an intensely yuppy neighborhood where you're never more than a few steps from yogurt. "Yumpy" emerged after Gary Hart won the New Hampshire primary, followed quickly by victories in Maine and Vermont. Clearly "yumpy" is a local variant which only gained national prominence because Hart's early victories were in predominantly rural states.

The term "yumpy" is doubly inadequate. First, because it misses the genuinely urban flavor of young professional culture, with its emphasis on neighborhoods and restaurants and renovation. Second, because "upwardly" mobile" is a misnomer. If anything, yuppy culture is permeated with a sense of *downward* mobility, of couples struggling with two incomes to achieve a middle-class life that their parents enjoyed with one. Statistics do not, in fact, bear out the widespread feeling that things are tougher for today's middle class than they were for the previous generation, except for one aspect of life. But that aspect looms large: housing.

When my family made the big leap to the suburbs twenty-two years ago, my father worried that his children did not fully appreciate this achievement. I remember vividly that he sat me down in our new home and said pointedly: "You know, this is the nicest house I've ever lived in." I'm sure it never occurred to him, and it certainly never occurred to me until much later, that it might be the nicest house I'd ever live in as well.

One theory of yuppy consumption patterns is that pricey comestibles like designer chocolate chip cookies at $1.50 each are "affordable luxuries." They serve as consolation for the lack of unaffordable luxuries like a large house. You may not have a dining room, but you have a dining room table, and everything on it can have a complicated explanation involving many foreign words.

Surely this is more to be pitied than scorned. So be nice. Take a yuppy to brunch.

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Cleaning Up Quotes

HAVING COFFEE WITH my copy of *The New York Times* at the Bread Oven restaurant one morning this week, I was astonished to read the headline, A WRITER FOR THE NEW YORKER SAYS HE CREATED COMPOSITES IN REPORTS. Astonished not because of the substance of the story, all of which had appeared in a feature in *The Wall Street Journal* the day before, but because the editors of the *Times* had chosen to play it so big. Page one of the newspaper of record! Does this strike you as excessive for the revelation that in a *New Yorker* article published twenty-three years ago, Alastair Reid described a nonexistent conversation in a defunct Spanish bar? It strikes me that way. Perhaps the *Times*, having given page-one treatment to *The Washington Post*'s troubles with Janet Cooke's fictionalizing and to the *Journal*'s with R. Foster Winan's finagling, felt it could do no less for *The New Yorker*. Or perhaps the *Times* simply wanted to record its satisfaction that *The New Yorker*, with its irritatingly famous fact-checking apparatus, apparently puts its pants on one leg at a time like everybody else.

NO DOUBT IT WAS foolish, even wrong, of Reid to condense the substance of many scattered interviews into a single fictional episode. This goes beyond the common practice of "cleaning up quotes" to get rid of the "y'know"s and "I mean"s. Of course it's nowhere near as serious as the Cooke and Winans affairs; nor, for that matter, is it as serious as some of the *Times*'s own goofs, such as the phony "Blood Brothers" race-war sensation of 1964 and the bogus sighting of Pol Pot by a writer for the *Times Magazine* in 1981. Still, it's the sort of thing one would prefer to avoid, especially if one makes as big a deal out of fact-checking as *The New Yorker* does. *The New Yorker*'s checkers are very thorough. (They even check poetry.) I regularly had occasion to be grateful to the checkers during my own stint on that magazine. My only complaint was that they sometimes forgot that facts are not always ends in themselves. For instance, in 1972, just after George McGovern was nominated for President, I wrote a "Talk of the Town" story about South Dakota. The story was mostly a compendium of funny facts, calculated to show how very exotic that faraway state is if you're used to New York. As I recall, one thing I did was to stack some South Dakota statistics on top of each other in a pyramid, as in—

8 FM radio stations
14 state forests
243 Grange halls

—and so on, with one more digit per statistic, right down to—

690,768 people
2,232,440 hogs.

A checker duly checked these facts and discovered that since the reference book I was using had come out, South Dakota had added nine new FM radio stations, so she changed the number to seventeen. It kind of blew the joke, which was feeble enough to begin with. Accurate story, though.

I GIVE NEW YORKERGATE maybe three days before it's pushed out of the news by the latest Papal murder mystery. This one has nothing to do with Bulgarians. It concerns the suggestion in a just-published book by an American journalist called David Yallop that Pope John Paul I was poisoned by a cabal of Vatican big shots, including the late John Cardinal Cody of Chicago. I can see only two possibilities here. First possibility: Yallop is right, in which case we are looking at the most sensational Vatican scandal since the Borgias. Second possibility: Yallop is wrong, in which case Bantam Books, which has rushed into print with 172,000 copies of *In God's Name: An Investigation into the Murder of Pope John Paul I*, and the Book-of-the-Month Club, which has picked it as an alternate selection for July, are in a lot more trouble than Alastair Reid ever dreamed of. In fact Bantam and B.O.M.C. could be faced with an embarrassment of Hitler diary proportions. Unlike newspapers and magazines, book publishers usually try to get away with the contention that accuracy is strictly the author's business and that the publisher is merely a common carrier, like the phone company. In this case, however, Bantam seems to be taking a marginally more responsible position. "We stand by the account as Yallop has written it," Bantam's Stuart Applebaum told the New York *Daily News*. "We also stand by his reporting, which is in the best tradition of the classic thriller." Oops.

ONE PLACE WHERE they don't clean up quotes is at *Rolling Stone*. The newspaper of record may fudge the facts once in a while, but not the newspaper of records. *Rolling Stone* is a stronghold of tape-recorder journalism. For instance, here is Bob Dylan, being asked in a five-thousand-word interview in the June 21 issue if he thinks it's worth bothering to work for peace: "Nah, none of that matters. I heard somebody on the radio talkin' about what's happenin' in Haiti, you know? 'We must be concerned about what's happening in Haiti. We're *global people* now.' And they're gettin' everybody in that frame of mind—like, we're not just the United States anymore, we're *global*. We're thinkin' in terms of the whole world because communications come right into your house. Well, that's what the Book of Revelation is all *about*." It's difficult to see what purpose is served by transcribing tapes of this kind and distributing the transcripts to impressionable young people. In my day we thought Bob Dylan was God. We studied the lyrics of songs like "Positively Fourth Street" as if *they* were the Book of Revelation. The half million people who went to the Woodstock rock festival in 1969 did so largely on the strength of a rumor that Dylan might be there. Now this one-time world historical figure is held up to public scorn—in a newspaper named for one of his own songs!—for the amusement of pubescent Boy George fans. Dylan was never the same after his motorcycle accident of 1966. He survived it, but his legend didn't. If it had been the other way around, there would not now be a fence or hoarding in America without the words DYLAN LIVES daubed on it. Instead, this great man has become a shambling wreck who misleads *Rolling Stone* readers into thinking the '60s were a fraud.

BY THE WAY, I actually had lunch at the Bread Oven, not breakfast; I read the paper in the office in mid-afternoon; and I'm having coffee right now. That was a composite.

H.H.

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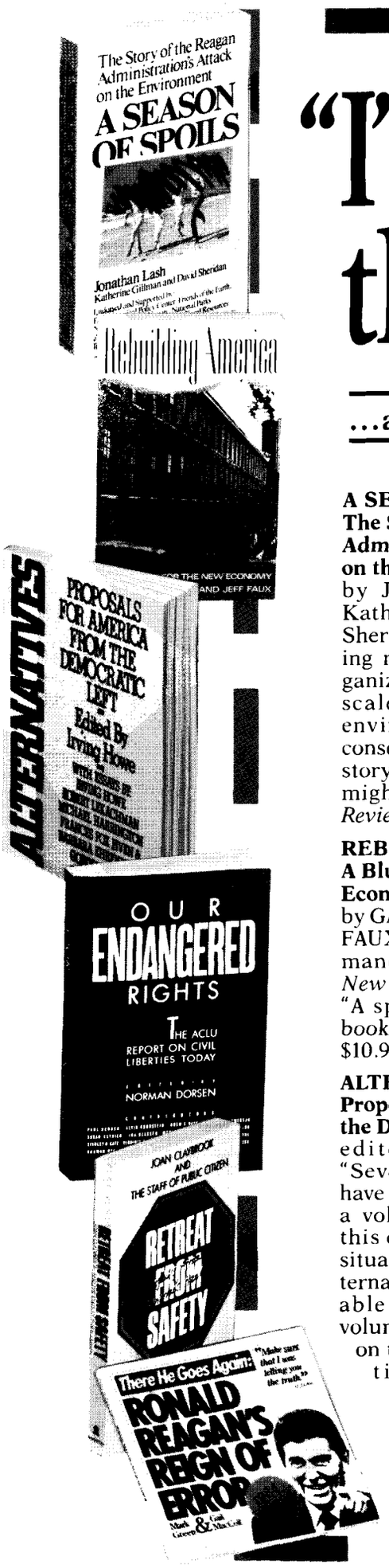
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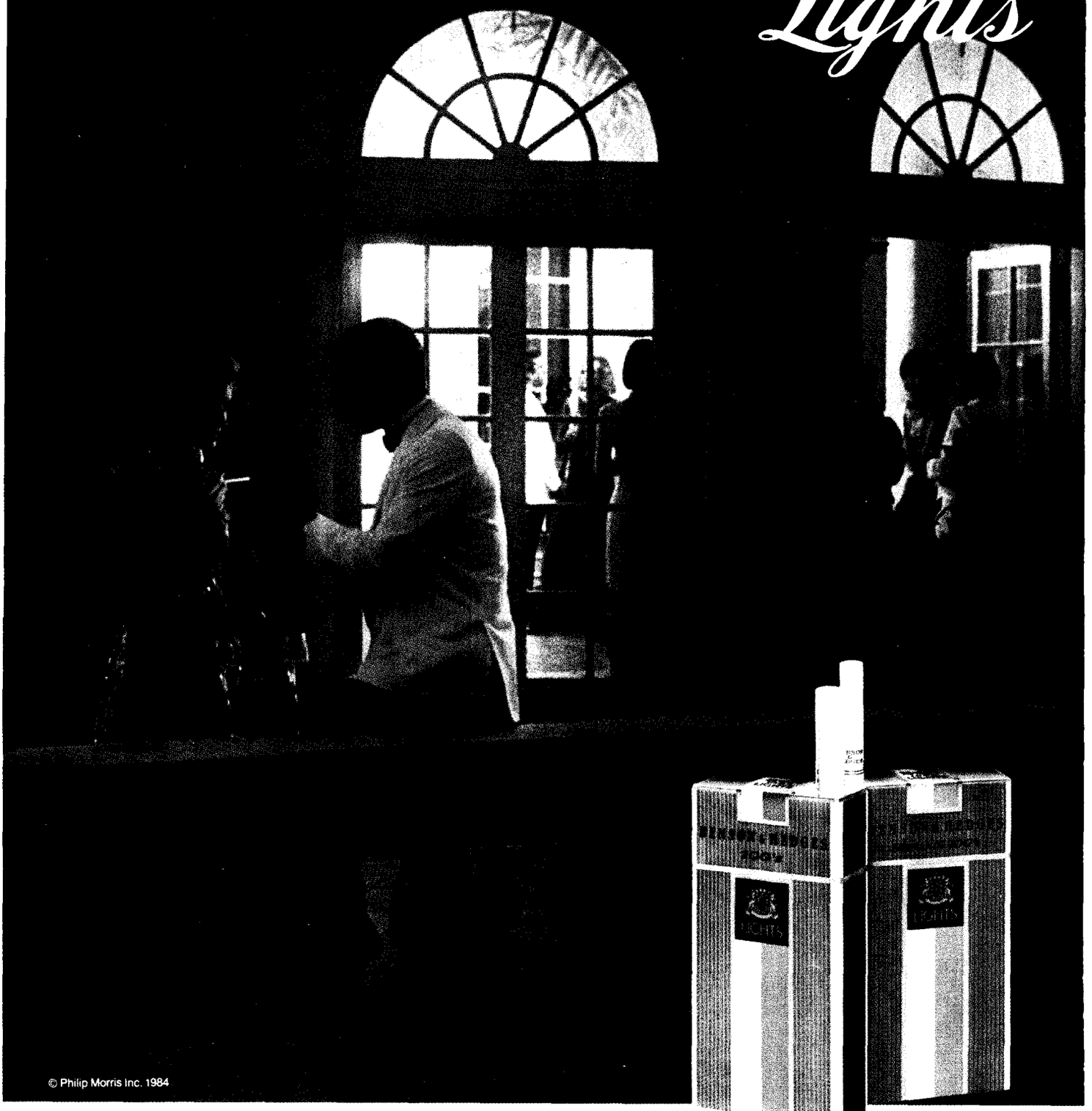

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